THE FLOATING PRINCE AND OTHER FAIRY TALES

BY

FRANK R. STOCKTON

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

THE

FLOATING PRINCE

AND OTHER

FAIRY TALES.

BY

FRANK R. STOCKTON

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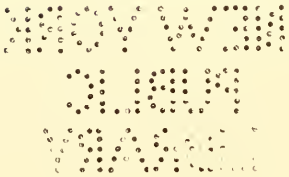

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THE FLOATING PRINCE

AND OTHER

FAIRY TALES.

THE FLOATING PRINCE.

THERE was once an orphan prince, named Nassime, who had been carefully educated to take his place upon the throne of his native country. Everything that a king ought to know had been taught him, and he was considered, by the best judges, to be in every way qualified to wear a crown and to wield a scepter.

But when he became of age, and was about to take his place upon the throne, a relative, of great power and influence in the country, concluded that he would be king himself, and so the young prince was thrown out upon the world. The new king did not want him in his dominions, and it was therefore determined, by his teachers and guardians, that he would have to become a "floating prince." By this, they meant that he must travel about, from place to place, until he found some kingdom which needed a king, and which was willing to accept him to rule over it. If such a situation were vacant, he could easily obtain it.

He was therefore furnished with a new suit of clothes and a good sword; a small crown and a scepter were packed into his bag; and he was started out to seek his fortune, as best he could.

As the prince walked away from the walls of his native city, he felt quite down-hearted, although he was by nature gay and hopeful. He did not believe that he could find any country which would want him for a ruler.

"That is all nonsense," he said to himself. "There are always plenty of heirs or usurpers to take a throne when it is empty. If I want a kingdom, I must build up one for myself, and that is just what I will do. I will gather together my subjects as I go along. The first person I meet shall be my chief councilor of state, the second shall be head of the army, the third shall be admiral of the navy, the next shall be chief treasurer, and then I will collect subjects of various classes."

Cheered by this plan, he stepped gayly on, and just as he was entering a wood, through which his pathway led him, he heard some one singing.

Looking about him, he saw a little lady, about five inches high, sitting upon a twig of a flowering bush near by, and singing to herself. Nassime instantly perceived that she was a fairy, and said to himself: "Oho! I did not expect a meeting of this sort." But as he was a bold and frank young fellow, he stepped up to her and said: "Good-morning, lady fairy. How would you like to be chief councilor to a king?"

"It would be splendid!" said the lively little fairy, her eyes sparkling with delight. "But where is the king?"

"I am the king," said Nassime, "or, rather, I am to be, as soon as I get my kingdom together."

And then he told her his story and his plans. The fairy was charmed. The plan suited her exactly.

"You might get a larger councilor than I am," she said, "but I know a good deal about government. I have been governed ever so much, and I could not help learning how it is done. I'm glad enough to have a chance to help somebody govern other people. I'll be your chief councilor."

"All right," said the prince, who was much pleased with the merry little creature. "Now we'll go and hunt up the rest of the kingdom."

He took the little fairy in his hand and placed her in one of the folds of his silken girdle, where she could rest, as if in a tiny hammock, and then he asked her name.

"My name," she answered, "is Lorilla, chief councilor of the kingdom of—what are you going to call your kingdom?"

"Oh, I haven't thought of a name, yet."

"Let it be Nassimia, after yourself," said Lorilla.

"Very well," answered the prince, "we will call it Nassimia. That will save trouble and disputes, after the kingdom is established."

Nassime now stepped along quite briskly, talking to his little companion as he went, and explaining to her his various ideas regarding his future kingdom. Suddenly he stumbled over what he supposed was the trunk of a fallen tree, and then he was quickly raised into the air, astride of the supposed tree-trunk, which seemed to have a hinge in it.

"What now?" said a great voice, and the prince perceived that he was sitting on the knee of a giant, who had been lying on his back in the wood.

"Don't be afraid," said Lorilla, looking out of her little hammock. "He won't hurt you."

"Excuse me," said the prince, "I did not see you, or I should have been more careful. How would you like to be general of the army of the kingdom of Nassimia?"

"That sounds splendidly!" cried little Lorilla.

The giant looked bewildered. He could not understand, at all, what the prince was talking about. But when Nassime explained

"THE GIANT LOOKED BEWILDERED."

it all to him, he said he would like very well to be head general of the army, and he accepted the position.

Rising to his feet, the giant offered to carry the prince on his arm, so that they could get along faster, and in this way they traveled, all discussing, with much zest, the scheme of the new kingdom.

About noon, they began to be hungry, and so they sat down in a shady place, the giant having said that he had something to eat in a bag which he carried at his side. He opened this bag, and spread out half a dozen enormous loaves of bread, two joints of roast meat, a boiled ham, and about a bushel of roasted potatoes.

"Is that the food for your whole army?" asked Lorilla.

"Oh, no," answered the giant, who was a young fellow with a good appetite. "I brought this for myself, but there will be enough for you two. I don't believe I should have eaten it quite all, anyway."

"I should hope not," said the prince. "Why, that would last me several weeks."

"And me a thousand years," said Lorilla.

"You will talk differently, if you ever grow to be as big as I am," said the giant, smiling, as he took a bite from a loaf of bread.

When the meal was over, they all felt refreshed, and quite eager to meet the next comer, who was to be the admiral, or commander of the navy, of the new kingdom. For some time, they went on without seeing any one, but, at last, they perceived, in a field at some distance, a man on stilts. He was tending sheep, and wore the stilts so that he could the better see his flock, as it wandered about.

"There's the admiral!" said the giant. "Let me put you down, and run over and catch him."

So saying, he set the prince on the ground, and ran toward the shepherd, who, seeing him coming, at once took to flight. His stilts were so long that he made enormous steps, and he got over the ground very fast. The giant had long legs, and he ran swiftly, but he had a great deal of trouble to get near the man on stilts, who dodged in every direction, and rushed about like an enormous crane. The poor frightened sheep scattered themselves over the fields, and hid in the bushes.

At last, the giant made a vigorous dash, and swooping his long arm around, he caught the shepherd by one stilt, and waving him around his head, shouted in triumph.

The prince and Lorilla, who had been watching this chase with great interest, cheered in return.

"Now we have an admiral," said the fairy, as the giant approached, proudly bearing the shepherd aloft. "Don't you think it would be well for you to get out your crown and scepter? He ought to understand, at once, that you are the king."

So Nassime took his crown and scepter from his bag, and putting the one on his head, held the other in his hand. He looked quite kingly when the giant came up, and set the shepherd down on his knees before him, with his stilts sticking out ever so far behind.

THE GENERAL TRIES TO SECURE AN ADMIRAL.

"I am glad to see you," said the prince, "and I herewith make you admiral of my royal navy."

"Admiral?" cried the poor frightened man. "I don't understand."

"Oh, it's all right," exclaimed the merry little Lorilla, as she slipped out of the prince's sash, and ran up to the shepherd. "We're going to have a splendid kingdom, and we're just getting together the head officers. I'm chief councilor, that giant is the

general of the army, and we want you to command the navy. There'll be a salary, after a while, and I know you'll like it."

As she went on to explain the whole matter to the shepherd, his fear left him, and he smiled.

"I shall be very glad to be your admiral," he then said, to the prince, whereupon the giant lifted him up on his feet, or rather on to the stilts, which were strapped to his feet and ankles, and the affair was settled. The party now went on, the giant and the man on stilts side by side, the prince on the giant's arm, and Lorilla in Nassime's sash.

"What other great officer must we have?" asked she of Nassime.

"The chief officer of the treasury, or chancellor of the exchequer. I see him now."

It was true. Along a road in a valley below them a man was walking. Instantly all were excited. The giant and the man on stilts wished to run after the new-comer, but the prince forbade it, saying it would be better to approach him quietly.

The man, who halted when he saw them, proved to be a clam-digger, with his clam-rake over one shoulder, and a large basket in his hand. The prince did not waste many words with this person, who was a rather humble-minded man, but briefly explained the situation to him, and told him that he was now the chancellor of the exchequer, in charge of the treasury of the kingdom of Nassimia.

The man, remarking that he saw no objection to such a position, and that it might, in the end, be better than clam-digging, joined the prince's party, which again proceeded on its way.

That night, they all slept in a palm-grove, first making a supper of cocoa-nuts, which the giant and the admiral picked from the tops of the trees.

"Now, then," said Nassime, in the morning, "what we must

have next, is an aristocracy. Out of this upper class, we can then fill the government offices."

"Very true," said the giant, "and we shall want an army. I do not feel altogether like a general, without some soldiers under me."

"And *I* must have a navy," said the admiral.

"And there must be common people," remarked the chancellor of the exchequer. "For we shall need some folks on whom I can levy taxes with which to carry on the government."

"You are all right," said Nassime, "and this is the way we will manage matters. All the people we meet to-day shall be the aristocrats of Nassimia; all we meet to-morrow shall form the army, and all we see the next day shall be taken to make up the navy. After that, we will collect common people, until we have enough."

"I can tell you now," said the admiral, "how to get a lot of aristocrats all together in a bunch. A mile ahead of where we now are, is a school-house, and it is full of boys, with a gray-headed master. Those fellows ought to make excellent aristocrats."

"They will do very well," said Nassime, "and we will go quietly forward and capture them all."

When they reached the school-house, Nassime, with his crown on his head and his scepter in his hand, took his position at the front door, the giant crouched down by the back door, the chancellor stood by one window and the admiral tried to stand by the other, but his stilts were so long that he looked over the roof, instead of into the window.

"Is not that a well near you?" said the little councilor Lorilla, who was perched on a vine, for safe-keeping. "Step into that, and you will, most likely, be just tall enough."

The admiral stepped into the well, which was close to the house, and found that he stood exactly high enough to command the window.

When all were posted, Nassime opened his door, and stepping a short distance into the room, declared his title and position, and called upon them all to consider themselves members of the aristocracy of his kingdom. The moment he said this, the astonished and frightened boys sprang to their feet and made a rush for the back door, but when they threw it open, there squatted the giant, with a broad grin on his face, and his hands spread out before the door-way. They then turned and ran, some for one window and some for the other, but at one stood the treasurer, brandishing his clam-rake, and at the other the admiral, shaking his fists. There was no escape,—one or two, who tried to pass by Nassime, having been stopped by a tap on the head from his scepter,—and so the boys crowded together in the middle of the room, while some of the smaller ones began to cry. The master was too much startled and astonished to say a word.

Then came running into the room little Lorilla, and mounting to the top of the school-master's table, she addressed the school, telling them all about the new kingdom, and explaining what a jolly time they would have. It would be like a long holiday, and although their master would go with them, to teach them what they would have to know in their new position, it would not be a bit like going to school.

As soon as the boys heard that they would not have to go to school, they agreed to the plan on the spot. Some of them even went out to talk to the giant. As to the master, he said that if his school was to be taken into the new kingdom he would go, too, for he had promised the parents that he would take care of their boys.

So, when all was settled, the whole school, headed by the master, made ready to follow Nassime and his officers. The giant pulled the admiral out of the well, much to the delight of the boys, and all started off in high good humor.

The company went into camp on the edge of a wood, quite early in the evening, because Lorilla said that boys ought not to be up late. If it had not been for the luncheons which the boys had in their baskets, and which they cheerfully shared with their older companions, many of the party would have gone to sleep hungry that night. As for the giant, it is probable that he did go to sleep hungry, for it would have taken the contents of all the baskets to have entirely satisfied his appetite.

Early the next morning, he aroused the party.

"Here are a few bushels of cocoa-nuts," he cried, emptying a great bag on the ground. "I gathered them before any of you were awake. Eat them quickly, for we must be off. To-day is my army day, and I want to get as many soldiers as I can."

As every one was very willing to please the giant, an early start was made, and, before very long, the party reached the edge of a desert. They journeyed over the sand nearly all day, but not a living being did they see. Late in the afternoon, a black man, on an ostrich, was seen coming from behind a hillock of sand, and immediately, with a great shout, the whole party set out in chase.

It is probable that the man on the bird would have soon got away from his pursuers, had not the ostrich persisted in running around in a great circle, while, with whoops and shouts, the giant and the rest succeeded in heading off the ostrich, which tumbled over, throwing his rider on the sand. The bird then ran off as fast as he could go, while the negro was seized by every aristocrat who could get near enough to lay hold of him. The giant now came up, and lifted the man from the midst of his young captors. "You need not be frightened," said he. "You are to belong to my army. That is all. I will treat you well."

"And not kill me?" whimpered the black man.

THE GENERAL AND THE ADMIRAL LED THE PROCESSION.

'Certainly not," said the giant. "I need soldiers too much to want to kill the only one I 've got. Fall into line, behind me and we 'll march on and see if we cannot find you some comrades."

But by night-fall the giant's army still consisted of one black man. The party encamped in an oasis, where grew a number of date-palms, the fruit of which afforded a plentiful supper for everybody. The giant had not much appetite, and he looked solemn while gazing at his army, as it sat cross-legged on the ground, eating dates.

The next morning, the admiral earnestly petitioned that they should try to get out of the desert as soon as possible. "For," said he, "I have a dreadful time in this sand with my stilts, and I really need more men in my navy than the giant has in his army. Besides, the best kind of sailors can never be found in a dry desert, like this."

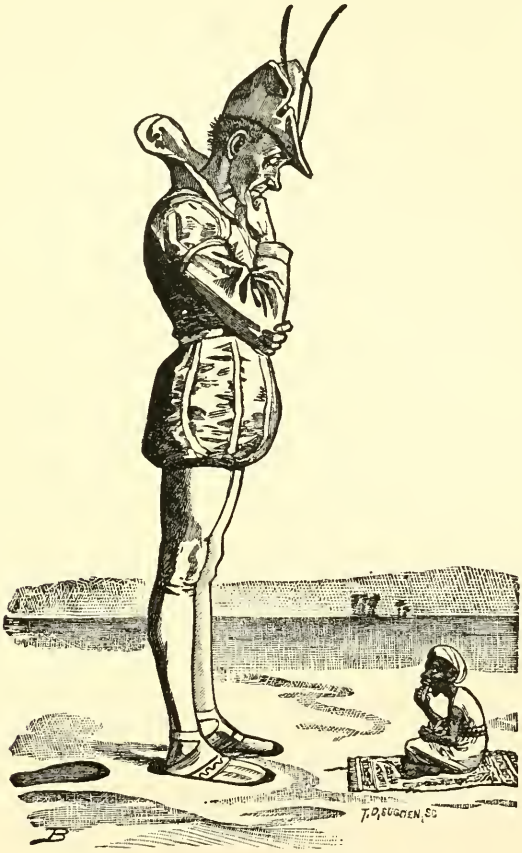
As no one could object to this reasoning, they set forth, turning to the east, and, before noon, they saw before them fields and vegetation, and shortly afterward they came to a broad river. Journeying down the bank of this for a mile or two, they perceived, lying at anchor in the stream, a good-sized vessel, with a tall mast, and a great sail hauled down on the deck.

"Hurrah!" shouted the admiral, the moment he set his eyes upon this prize, and away he went for it, as fast as his stilts would carry him. When he reached the water, he waded right in, and was soon standing looking over the vessel's side.

He did not get on board, but, after standing for some time talking to a person inside, he waded back to the shore, where his companions were anxiously waiting to hear what he had discovered.

"There are not many persons on board," he said, rather rue-

fully. "Only an old woman and a girl. One is the cook and the other washes bottles. There were a good many men on the ship,



THE GIANT AND HIS ARMY.

but the old woman says that they all went away yesterday, carrying with them a vast number of packages. She thinks they were a lot of thieves, and that they have gone off with their booty and

have deserted the vessel. She and the girl were simply hired as servants, and knew nothing about the crew. It is n't exactly the kind of navy I wanted, but it will do, and we may see some men before night."

It was unanimously agreed that the government of Nassimia should take possession of this deserted vessel, and the giant soon managed to pull her to shore, anchor and all. Everybody excepting the giant went on board, Nassime and Lorilla going first, then the government officers, the aristocracy, and the army. The admiral stood on his stilts, with his head up in the rigging, and the ship was formally placed under his command. When all was ready, the giant ran the ship out into the stream, wading in up to his middle; and then he very carefully clambered on board. The vessel rocked a good deal as he got in, but it could carry him so long as he kept quiet.

"As my navy is not large enough, just now, to work the ship," said the admiral to Nassime, "and, also, as it doesn't know anything about such work, I shall have to have the help of the aristocracy, and shall also have to ask the general to lend me his army."

"All right," said the giant, "you can have him."

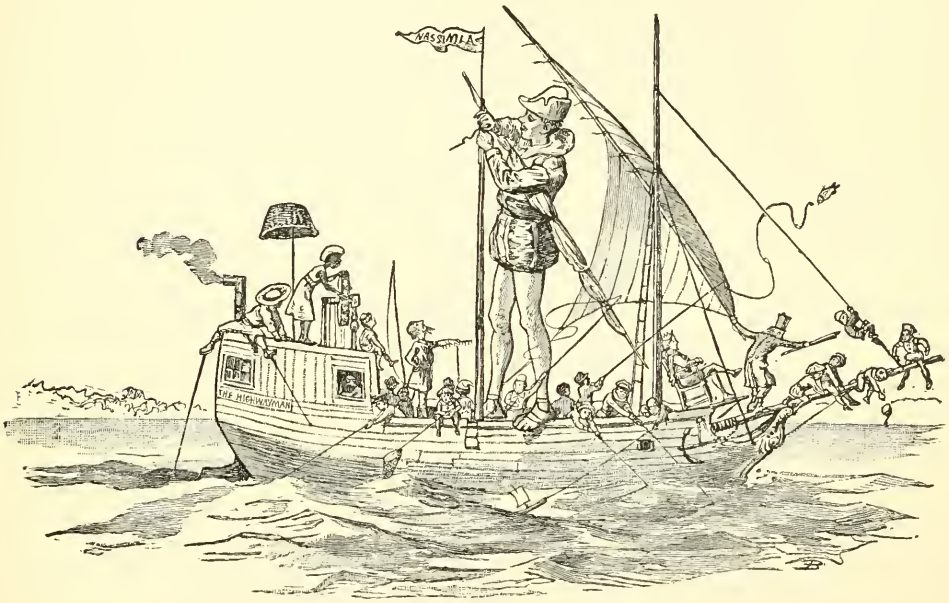
A number of the larger boys, assisted by the negro, now went to work and hoisted the sail. Then the army was sent to the helm, the vessel was put before the wind, and the kingdom of Nassimia began to sail away.

There was a large quantity of provisions on board, enough to last many days, and everybody ate heartily. But not a person was seen that day on either bank of the river.

They anchored at night, and the next morning, setting sail again, they soon entered a broad sea or lake. They sailed on, with the wind behind them, and everybody enjoyed the trip. The

admiral sat on the stern, with his stilts dangling behind in the water, as the ship sailed on, and was very happy.

"Now," said the chancellor of the exchequer, as the officers of the government were talking together on deck, "all we want is



THE KINGDOM OF NASSIMIA AFLOAT.

some common people, and then we can begin the kingdom in real earnest."

"We must have some houses and streets," said Nassime, "and a palace. These will be necessary before we can settle down as a kingdom."

They sailed all night, and the next day they saw land before

them. And, slowly moving near the shore, they perceived a long caravan.

"Hi!" shouted the chancellor of the exchequer, "there are the common people!"

Everybody was now very much excited, and everybody wanted to go ashore, but this Nassime would not permit. Capturing a caravan would be a very different thing from capturing a negro on an ostrich, and the matter must be undertaken with caution and prudence. So, ordering the ship brought near the shore, he made ready to land, accompanied only by the giant and Lorilla.

The giant had found a spare mast on the vessel, and he had trimmed and whittled it into a convenient club. This he took under one arm, and, with Nassime on the other, wearing his crown and carrying Lorilla in his sash, the giant waded ashore, and stopped a short distance in front of the approaching caravan.

Nassime, having been set on the ground, advanced to the leader of the caravan, and, drawing his sword, called upon him to halt. Instantly the procession stopped, and the leader, dismounting from his horse, approached Nassime, and bowed low before him, offering to pay tribute, if necessary.

"We will not speak of tribute," said Nassime, "at least not now. What I wish, is to know who you all are, and where you are going."

"That is easily answered," said the other, giving a glance upward at the giant, who stood leaning on his club, behind Nassime; "we are a company of men of high degree; of philosophers and of rich merchants, who have joined together to visit foreign lands, to enjoy ourselves and improve our minds. We have brought with us our families, our slaves, and our flocks and other possessions. We wish to offend no one, and if you object to our passing through your dominions——"

"I do not object," said Nassime, "I am very glad you came this way. These are not my dominions. I am king of Nassimia."

"And where is that, your majesty?"

"It is not anywhere in particular, just now," said Nassime, "but we shall soon fix upon a spot where its boundaries will be established. It is a new kingdom, and only needed a body of com—"

"Say populace," whispered Lorilla, from his sash, "the other might offend him."

"And only needed a populace," continued Nassime, "to make it complete. I am the king—of royal blood and education. I have ministers of state and finance; an admiral and a navy; a general of the army, whom you see here," pointing to the giant, "and an aristocracy, which is at present on board of that ship. I have been looking for a populace, and am very glad to have met you. You and your companions are now my people."

"What, your majesty?" cried the astonished leader of the caravan. "I do not comprehend."

Nassime then explained the plan and purpose of his kingdom, and assured the other that he and his countrymen could nowhere be more happy than in the kingdom of Nassimia, where every opportunity of enjoyment and the improvement of the mind would be offered to the people.

The leader, on hearing this, begged permission to consult with his fellow-travelers. Some advised one thing and some another, but the sight of the giant, who every now and then playfully struck the earth with the end of his club in such a way as to make the ground tremble, hastened their decision.

"If we were poor men," said one of the philosophers, "and had no treasures with us, we might scatter in various directions, and many of us might escape. That giant could not kill us all.

But we are too rich for that. We cannot run away from our great possessions. We must submit in peace."

So it was settled that they should submit to the king of Nassimia and become his people, and the leader carried the decision to Nassime.

The chancellor of the exchequer now became very anxious to go on shore. He had cast off his clam-digger's clothes, and wore a magnificent suit which he had found in the ship, and which had belonged to the robber captain. He stood on the deck and made signs for the giant to come for him. So the giant was sent for him, and soon returned, bringing also the army, which the chancellor had borrowed of him for a time. This officer, as soon as he had landed, approached Nassime and said:

"These, then, are the common people. I suppose I might as well go to work and collect taxes."

"You need not hurry about that," said Nassime.

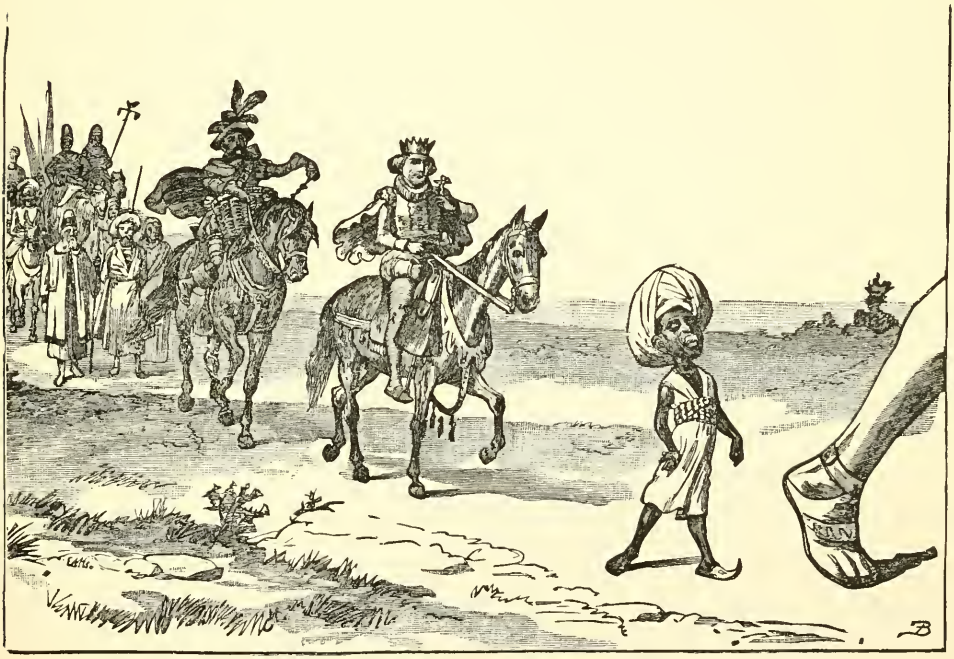
"They will never believe in your government until you do it," urged the chancellor, and so Nassime allowed him to do as he wished, only telling him not to levy his taxes too heavily.

Then the chancellor, with the negro behind him, carrying his old clam-basket, over which a cloth had been thrown, went through the caravan and collected taxes enough in gold and silver to fill his basket. He also collected a horse for himself and one for Nassime. "Now," said he, "we have the foundation of a treasury, and the thing begins to look like a kingdom."

Everything being now satisfactorily arranged, the company began to move on. The giant, with his army at his heels, and his club over his shoulder, marched first. Then rode Nassime with Lorilla, then the chancellor, with his basket of treasure before him on his horse, and after him the caravan. The ship sailed along a short distance from the shore.

In the evening, the land party encamped near the shore, and the vessel came to anchor, the giant shouting to the admiral Nassime's commands. The chancellor wished to make another collection of taxes, after supper, but this Nassime forbade.

Lorilla then had a long talk with Nassime, apart from the company, assuring him that what was needed next was the royal city.



"THE COMPANY BEGAN TO MOVE ON."

"Yes, indeed," said Nassime, "and we are not likely to meet with that as we have met with everything else. We must build a city, I suppose."

"No," said Lorilla, gayly. "We can do much better. Do

you see that heavy forest on the hills back of us? Well, in that forest is the great capital city of my people, the fairies. We are scattered in colonies all over the country, but there is our court and our queen. And it is the fairies who can help you to get a royal city. This very evening, I will go and see what can be done."

So, that evening, Nassime took Lorilla to the edge of the forest, and while she ran swiftly into its depths, he lay down and slept. Early the next morning, while the stars were still shining, she returned and awoke him, and while they were going to the camp she told him her news.

"Our queen," she said, "will have a city built for you, all complete, with everything that a city needs, but before she will have this done, she commands that some one in your party shall be changed into a fairy, to take my place! This must be a grown person who consents to the exchange, as I have agreed to be your chief councilor of state. And it must be some one whose mind has never been occupied with human affairs."

"I don't believe you will find any such person among us," said Nassime, ruefully.

But Lorilla clapped her hands and cried, merrily:

"Ah, yes! The bottle-washer! I believe she is the very person."

Nassime was cheered by this idea, and as soon as they reached the shore, he asked the giant to carry him and Lorilla to the ship. Early as it was, they found the young girl sitting on the deck, quietly washing bottles. She had lost her parents when an infant, and had never had any one to care for. She had passed her life, since she was a very small child, in washing bottles, and as this employment does not require any mental labor, she had never concerned herself about anything.

"She will do," exclaimed Lorilla, when she had found out all this. "I don't believe her mind was ever occupied at all. It is perfectly fresh for her to begin as a fairy."

When the girl was asked if she would be a fairy, she readily consented, for it made no difference to her what she was, and when the admiral was asked if he would give her up, he said: "Oh, yes! To be sure, it will reduce my navy to one person, but, even then, it will be as large as the army. You may take her, and welcome." The bottle-washer therefore was taken to the shore, and Nassime conducted her to the woods with Lorilla. There he left them, promising to return at sunset.

"You must be careful of one thing," said Lorilla to him, before he left, "and that is, not to let those aristocrats come on shore. If they once get among the populace, they will begin to lord it over them in a way that will raise a dreadful commotion."

Nassime promised to attend to this, and when he went back he sent orders to the admiral, on no account to allow any aristocrat to come on shore. This order caused great discontent on the vessel. The boys could n't see why they alone should be shut up in the ship. They had expected to have lots of fun when the common people were found.

It was, therefore, with great difficulty that they were restrained from jumping overboard and swimming ashore in a body. The master had been made an ancient noble, but his authority was of little avail, and the poor admiral had his hands full. Indeed, he would have been in despair, had it not been for the gallant conduct of his navy. That brave woman seized a broom, and marching around the deck, kept watchful guard. Whenever she saw a boy attempting to climb over the side of the vessel, she brought down the broom with a whack upon him, and tumbled him back on the deck. In the afternoon, however, the giant came to the

vessel with a double arm-load of rich fruit, cakes, pastry and confectionery, an offering from the common people, which so delighted the aristocrats that there was peace on board for the rest of the day.

At sunset, Nassime went to the woods and met Lorilla, who was waiting for him.

"It 's all right!" she cried; "the bottle-washer is to be magically dwindled down to-night. And when everybody is asleep, the fairies will come here and will see how many people there are and what they are like, and they will build a city just to suit. It will be done to-morrow."

Nassime could scarcely believe all this, but there was nothing to be done but to wait and see. That night, everybody went to sleep quite early. And if the fairies came and measured them for a city, they did not know it.

In the morning, Nassime arose, and walked down toward the shore. As he did so, a lady came out of a tent and approached him. He thought he knew her features, but he could not remember who she was. But when she spoke, he started back and cried out: "Lorilla!"

"Yes," said the lady, laughing, "it is Lorilla. The king of Nassimia ought to have a chief councilor of state who is somewhat longer than his finger, and last night, as the girl who took my place dwindled down to the size of a fairy, I grew larger and larger, until I became as large as she used to be. Do you like the change?"

Lorilla was beautiful. She was richly dressed, and her lovely face was as merry and gay as ever.

Nassime approached her and took her hand.

"The chief councilor of my kingdom shall be its queen," he said, and calling a priest from the populace, the two were married on the spot.

Great were the rejoicings on land and water, but there was no delay in getting ready to march to the royal city, the domes and spires of which Lorilla pointed out to them behind some lovely groves. Nassime was about to signal for the ship to come to shore, but Lorilla checked him.

"I 'm really sorry for those poor aristocrats, but it will never do to take them to the royal city. They are not needed, and they would make all sorts of trouble. There is nothing to be done but to let the admiral sail away with them, and keep on sailing until they are grown up. Then they will come back, fit to be members of the nobility. They will have their master with them, and you can put three or four philosophers on board, and they can be as well educated, traveling about in this way, as if they were going to school."

Nassime felt sorry for the aristocrats, but he saw that this was good advice, and he took it. A quantity of provisions and four philosophers were sent on board the ship, and the admiral was ordered to sail away until the boys grew up. As he liked nothing better than sailing, this suited the admiral exactly, and after having a few sheep sent on board, with which to amuse himself during calms, he hoisted sail, and was soon far away.

The rest of the kingdom marched on, and in good time reached the royal city. There it stood, with its houses, streets, shops, and everything that a city should have. The royal palace glittered in the center, and upon a hill there stood a splendid castle for the giant!

Everybody hurried forward. The name of the owner was on every house, and every house was fully furnished, so in a few minutes the whole city was at home.

The king, leading his queen up the steps of his royal palace, paused at the door·

"All this," he said, "I owe to you. From the very beginning, you have given me nothing but good advice."

"But that is not the best of it," she said, laughing. "You always took it."

The vessel carrying the aristocrats sailed away and away, with the admiral sitting on the stern, his stilts dangling in the water behind, as the ship moved on.

HOW THE ARISTOCRATS SAILED AWAY.

A SEQUEL TO "THE FLOATING PRINCE."

FOR many and many a day, the ship of the admiral of the kingdom of Nassimia, containing the admiral himself, the company of school-boys who had been made aristocrats, the old schoolmaster, the four philosophers, and the old woman, who was cook and navy, all in one, sailed and sailed away.

The admiral sat on the stern, his long stilts dangling in the water behind, as the ship sailed on. He was happy, for this was just what he liked; and the four philosophers and the old master and the navy were happy; but the aristocrats gradually became very discontented. They did not want to sail so much; they wanted to go somewhere, and see something. The ship had stopped several times at towns on the coast, and the boys had gone on shore, but, in every case, the leading people of the town had come to the admiral, bearing rich presents, and begging him to sail as soon as possible. So it happened that the lively young aristocrats had been on land very little, since they started on their travels.

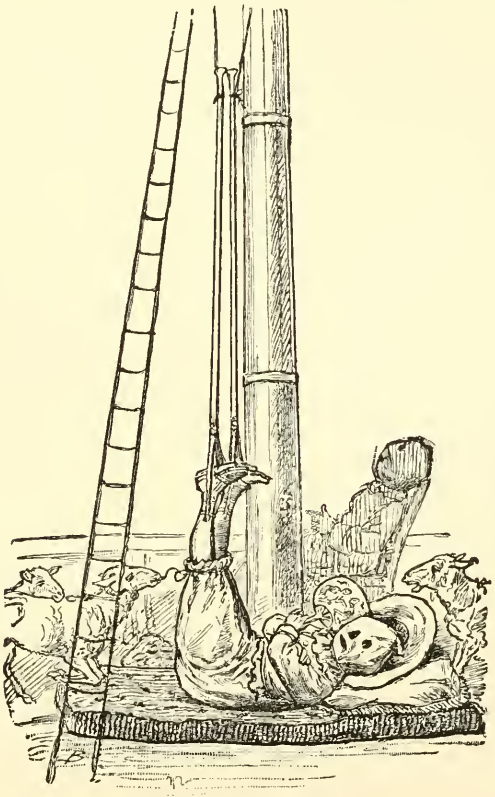
Finding, at last, that the admiral had no intention of landing again, the aristocrats determined to rebel, and, under the leadership of the Tail-boy, who was the poorest scholar among them, but first in all mischief, they formed a plan to take possession of the ship.

Accordingly, one fine afternoon, as the admiral, the master, and the four philosophers were sitting on the deck of the vessel enjoying the breeze, six aristocrats, each carrying a bag, slipped quietly up behind them, and, in an instant, a bag was clapped over the head of each man. It was in vain to kick and struggle. The other aristocrats rushed up, the bags were tied securely around the necks of the victims, their hands and feet were bound, and they were seated in a row at the stern of the ship, the admiral's stilts lying along the deck. The Tail-boy then took a pair of scissors and cut a hole in each bag, opposite the mouth of its wearer, so that he could breathe. The six unfortunate men were now informed that if they behaved well they should be treated well, and that, on the next day, a hole should be cut in each of their bags, so that they could see with one eye; on the next day, a hole for one ear; on the next, a hole for the nose; and if they still behaved well, holes should be cut on the two succeeding days for the other ears and eyes. The smartest boy of the school had said, when this arrangement was proposed, that by the time they got this far, they might as well take off the bags, but the rest of the aristocrats did not think so; a prisoner whose head was even partly bagged was more secure than one not bagged at all.

The admiral and his companions could think of nothing to do but to agree to these terms, and so they agreed, hoping that, by some happy chance, they would soon be released. It was suggested by a few aristocrats that it would be well to bring up the navy and bag her head also, but the majority decided that she was needed to do the cooking, and so she was shut down below, and ordered to cook away as hard as she could.

The prisoners were plentifully fed, at meal-times, by their captors, who put the food through the mouth-holes of their bags. At first, the aristocrats found this to be such fun that the poor men

could scarcely prevent themselves from being overfed. At night, cushions were brought for them to lie upon, and a rope was fastened to the ends of the admiral's stilts, which were hoisted up into the rigging, so as to be out of the way.



THE ADMIRAL AT NIGHT.

The aristocrats now did just as they pleased. They steered in the direction in which they supposed the coast should lie, and, as

they were sailing on, they gave themselves up to all manner of amusements. Among other things, they found a number of pots of paint stowed away in the ship's hold, and with these they set to work to decorate the vessel.

They painted the masts crimson, the sails in stripes of pink and blue, the deck light green, spotted with yellow stars, and nearly everything on board shone in some lively color. The admiral's sheep were adorned with bands of green, yellow, and crimson, and his stilts were painted bright blue, with a corkscrew red line running around them. Indeed, the smell of paint soon became so strong, that three of the philosophers requested that the nose-holes in their bags should be sewed up.

There is no knowing what other strange things these aristocrats would have done, had they not, on the fourth day of their rule on the vessel, perceived they were in sight of land, and of what seemed to be a large city on the coast. Instantly, the vessel was steered straight for the city, which they soon reached. The ship was made fast, and every aristocrat went on shore. The cook was locked below, and the admiral and his companions were told to sit still and be good until the boys should return.

Each of the prisoners now had holes in his bag for his mouth, his nose, one eye, and an ear, but as the eye-holes were all on the side toward the water, the poor men could not see much that was going on. They twisted themselves around, however, as well as they could, and so got an occasional glimpse of the shore.

The aristocrats swarmed up into the city, but although it was nearly midday, not a living soul did they meet. The buildings were large and handsome, and the streets were wide and well laid out; there were temples and palaces and splendid edifices of various kinds, but every door and shutter and gate of every house was closely shut, and not a person could be seen, nor a sound heard.

The silence and loneliness of the place quieted the spirits of the aristocrats, and they now walked slowly and kept together.

"What does it all mean?" said one. "Is the place bewitched, or has everybody gone out of town and taken along the dogs, and the birds, and the flies, and every living thing?"

"We might go back after one of the philosophers," said another. "He could tell us all about it."

"I don't believe he'd know any more than we do," said the Tail-boy, who had now forced his way to the front. "Let us go ahead, and find out for ourselves."

So they walked on until they came to a splendid edifice, which looked like a palace, and, much to their surprise, the great doors stood wide open. After a little hesitation, they went up the steps and peeped in. Seeing no one, they cautiously entered. Everything was grand and gorgeous within, and they gradually penetrated to a large hall, at one end of which they saw a wide stair-way, carpeted with the richest tapestry.

Reaching this, they concluded to go up and see what they could find upstairs. But as no one wished to be the first in such a bold proceeding, they went in a solid body. The stair-way was very wide, so that twelve boys could go up, abreast, and they thus filled three of the stairs, with several little boys on the next stair below.

On they went, up, up, and up, keeping step together. There was a landing above them, but it seemed to be farther up than they had supposed. Some of the little aristocrats complained of being tired; but as they did not wish to be left behind, they kept on.

"Look here," said one of the front row; "do you see that window up there? Well, we're not any nearer to it now than we were when we started."

"That's true," said another, and then the Smart-boy spoke up:

"I'll tell you what it is. We're not going up at all. These stairs are turning around and around, as we step on them. It's a kind of tread-mill!"

"Let's stop!" cried some of the boys; but others exclaimed, "Oh, no! Don't do that, or we shall be ground up!"

"Oh, please don't stop!" cried the little fellows below, forgetting their tired legs, "or we shall be ground up first."

So on they kept, stepping up and up, but never advancing, while some of them tried to think of a plan by which they all could turn around and jump off at the same instant. But this would be difficult and dangerous, and those little fellows would certainly be crushed by the others if they were not ground up by the stairs.

Around and around went the stairs, each step disappearing under the floor beneath, and appearing again above them; while the boys stepped up and up, wondering if the thing would ever stop. They were silent now, and they could hear a steady click, click, click, as the great stair-way went slowly around.

"Oh, I 'll tell you!" suddenly exclaimed the Smart-boy. "We 're winding it up!"

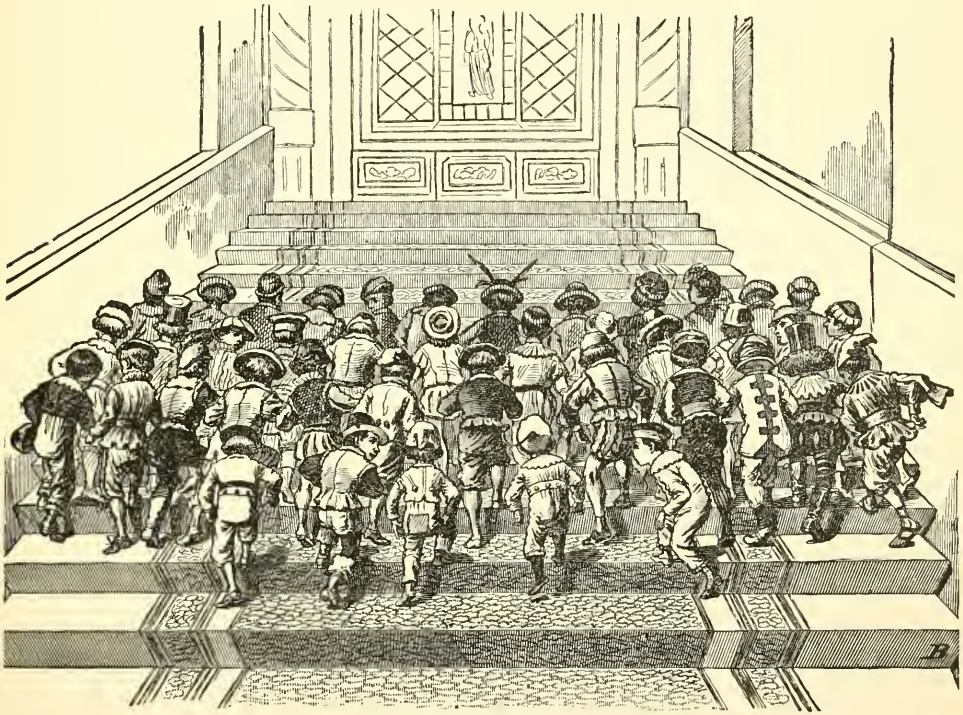
"Winding up what?" cried several of the others.

"Everything!" said the Smart-boy; "we 're winding up the city!"

This was true. Directly, sounds were heard outside; a dog barked; some cocks crew, and windows and doors were heard to open. The boys trembled, and forgot their weariness, as they stepped up and up. Some voices were heard below, and then, with a sudden jar, the stairs stopped.

"She 's wound!" said the Smart-boy, under his breath, and every aristocrat turned around and hurried off the stairs.

What a change had taken place in everything! From without, came the noise and bustle of a great city, and, within, doors were opening, curtains were being pulled aside, and people were running here, there, and everywhere. The boys huddled together in a corner of the hall. Nobody seemed to notice them.



THE ARISTOCRATS WINDING UP THE CITY.

Suddenly, a great gilded door, directly opposite to them, was thrown wide open, and a king and queen came forth. The king glanced around, eagerly.

"Hello!" he cried, as his eyes fell upon the cluster of frightened aristocrats. "I believe it is those boys! Look here," said he, advancing, "did you boys wind us up?"

"Yes, sir," said the Head-boy, "I think we did. But we did n't mean to. If you 'd let us off this time, we 'd never ——"

"Let you off!" cried the king. "Not until we 've made you the happiest boys on earth! Do you suppose we 're angry? Never such a mistake! What do you think of that?" he said, turning to the queen.

This royal lady, who was very fat, made no answer, but smiled, good-humoredly.

"You 're our greatest benefactors," continued the king. "I don't know what we can do for you. You did not imagine, perhaps, that you were winding us up. Few people, besides ourselves, know how things are with us. This city goes all right for ten years, and then it runs down, and has to be wound up. When we feel we have nearly run down, we go into our houses and apartments, and shut up everything tight and strong. Only this hall is left open, so that somebody can come in, and wind us up. It takes a good many people to do it, and I am glad there were so many of you. Once we were wound up by a lot of bears, who wandered in and tried to go upstairs. But they did n't half do it, and we only ran four years. The city has been still—like a clock with its works stopped—for as long as a hundred years at once. I don't know how long it was this time. I 'm going to have it calculated. How did you happen to get here?"

The boys then told how they had come in a ship, with the admiral, their master, and four philosophers.

"And the ship is here!" cried the king. "Run!" he shouted

to his attendants, "and bring hither those worthy men, that they may share in the honor and rewards of their pupils."

While the attendants were gone, the aristocrats waited in the hall, and the king went away to attend to other matters. The queen sat down on a sofa near by.

"It tires me dreadfully to smile," she said, as she wiped her brow; "but I have to take some exercise."

"I hope they won't bring 'em here, bags and all," whispered the Tail-boy. "It would look funny, but I should n't like it."

In a short time the king came back in a hurry.

"How 's this?" he cried. "My messengers tell me that there is no ship at our piers excepting our own vessels. Have you deceived me?"

The aristocrats gazed at each other in dismay. Had their ship sailed away and left them? If so, they had only been served aright. They looked so downcast and guilty that the king knew something was wrong.

"What have you done?" said he.

The Head-boy saw that there was no help for it, and he told all.

The king looked sad, but the queen smiled two or three times.

"And you put their heads in bags?" said the king

"Yes, sir," replied the Head-boy.

"Well, well!" said the king; "I am sorry. After all you have done for us, too. I will send out swift cruisers after that ship, which will be easy to find if it is painted as you say, and, until it is brought back to the city, I must keep you in custody. Look you," said he to his attendants; "take these young people to a luxurious apartment, and see that they are well fed and cared for, and also be very careful that none of them escape."

Thereupon, the aristocrats were taken away to an inner chamber of the palace.

When the admiral and his companions had been left on board the vessel, they felt very uneasy, for they did not know what might happen to them next. In a short time, however, when the voices of the aristocrats had died away as they proceeded into the city, the admiral perceived the point of a gimlet coming up through the deck, close to him. Then the gimlet was withdrawn, and these words came up through the hole:

"Have no fear. Your navy will stand by you!"

"It will be all right," said the admiral to the others. "I can depend upon her."

And now was heard a noise of banging and chopping, and soon the cook cut her way from her imprisonment below, and made her appearance on deck. She went to work vigorously, and, taking the bags from the prisoners' heads, unbound them, and set them at liberty. Then she gave them a piece of advice.

"The thing for us to do," said she, "is to get away from here as fast as we can. If those young rascals come back, there's no knowin' what they 'll do."

"Do you mean," said the master, "that we should sail away and desert my scholars? Who can tell what might happen to them, left here by themselves?"

"We should not consider what might happen to them if they were left," said one of the philosophers, "but what might happen to us if they were not left. We must away."

"Certainly!" cried the admiral. "While I have the soul of the commander of the navy of Nassimia left within me, I will not stay here to have my head put in a bag! Never! Set sail!"

It was not easy to set sail, for the cook and the philosophers were not very good at that sort of work; but they got the sail

up at last, and cast loose from shore, first landing the old master, who positively refused to desert his scholars. The admiral took the helm, and, the wind being fair, the ship sailed away.

The swift cruiser, which was sent in the direction taken by the admiral's vessel, passed her in the night, and as she was a very fast cruiser, and it was therefore impossible for the admiral's ship to catch up with her, the two vessels never met.

"Now, then," said the admiral the next day, as he sat with the helm in his hand, "we are free again to sail where we please. But I do not like to sail without an object. What shall be our object?"

The philosophers immediately declared that nothing could be more proper than that they should take a voyage to make some great scientific discovery.

"All right," said the admiral. "That suits me. What discovery shall we make?"

The philosophers were not prepared to answer this question at that moment, but they said they would try to think of some good discovery to make.

So the philosophers sat in a row behind the admiral, and thought and thought; and the admiral sat at the helm, with his blue-and-red stilts dangling in the water behind; and the cook prepared the meals, swept the deck, dusted the sail, and put things in order.

After several hours, the admiral turned around to ask the philosophers if they had thought of any discovery yet, when, to his amazement, he saw that each one of them had put his bag upon his head.

"What did you do that for?" cried the admiral, when each of the philosophers gave a little start; and then they explained that it was much easier to think with one's head in a bag. The outer

world was thus shut out, and trains of thought were not so likely to be broken up.

So, for day after day, the philosophers, with their heads in their bags, sat, and thought, and thought; and the admiral sat and steered, and the navy cooked and dusted and kept things clean. Sometimes, when she thought the sail did not catch the wind properly, she would move the admiral toward one side or the other, and thus change the course of the vessel.

"If I knew," said the admiral one day, "the exact age of the youngest of those aristocrats, I should know just how long we should have to sail, before they would all be grown up, and when it would be time for us to go back after them, and take them to Nassimia."

The cook remembered that the smallest boy had told her he was ten years old.

"Then," said the admiral, "we must sail for eleven years."

And they sailed for eleven years; the philosophers, with their heads in their bags, trying their best to think of some good thing to discover.

The day after the aristocrats had been shut up in their luxurious apartment, the queen sent a messenger to them, to tell them that she thought the idea of putting people's heads in bags was one of the most amusing things she ever heard of, and that she would be much obliged if they would send her the pattern of the proper kind of bag, so that she could have some made for her slaves.

The messenger brought scissors, and papers, and pins, and the boys cut a pattern of a very comfortable bag, with holes for the eyes, nose, mouth, and ears, which they sent with their respects to the queen. This royal lady had two bags made, which she put upon two of her servants, and their appearance amused her so

much that she smiled a great deal, and yet scarcely felt tired at all.

But, in the course of a day or two, the king happened to see these bag-headed slaves sitting in an ante-chamber. He was

THE KING'S CONSTERNATION.

struck with consternation, and instantly called a council of his chief ministers.

"We are threatened with a terrible danger," he said to them, when all the doors were shut. "We have among us a body of Bagists! Little did we think, in our gratitude, that we were wound up merely that we might go through life with our heads

bagged! Better far that we should stay stopped forever! How can we know but that the ship which brought them here may soon return, with a cargo of bag-stuffs, needles, thread, and thimbles, and that every head in our city may be bagged in a few days? Already, signs of this approaching evil have shown themselves. Notwithstanding the fact that these dangerous characters have been closely confined, no less than two of the inmates of my palace have already had their heads bagged!"

At these words, a thrill of horror pervaded the ministers, and they discussed the matter for a long time. It was finally decided that a lookout should be constantly kept on the top of a high tower, to give notice of the approach of the ship, should she return; additional guards were posted at the door of the aristocrats' apartment, and it was ordered that the city be searched every day, to see if any new cases of bagism could be discovered.

The aristocrats now began to be very discontented. Although they had everything they could possibly want to eat and drink, and were even furnished with toys and other sources of amusement, they did not like to be shut up.

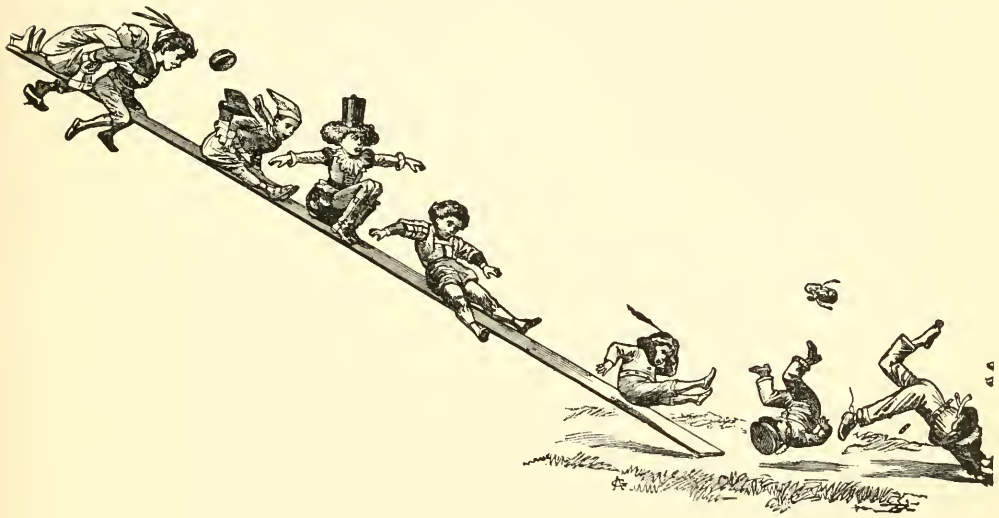
"I 'll tell you what it is," said the Tail-boy. "I can't stand this any longer. Let 's get away."

"But where shall we get away to?" asked several of the others.

"We 'll see about that when we 're outside," was the answer "Anything 's better than being shut up here."

After some talk, everybody agreed that they ought to try to escape, and they set about to devise some plan for doing so. The windows were not very high from the ground, but they were too high for a jump, and not a thing could be found in the room which was strong enough to make a rope. Every piece of silk or muslin in the curtains or bed-clothes was fine, and

delicate, and flimsy. At last, the Smart-boy hit upon a plan. The apartment was a very long one, and was floored with narrow boards, of costly wood, which ran from one end to the other of it. He proposed that they should take up one of these boards,



THE PRISONERS ESCAPE.

and, putting it out of the window, should rest one end on the ground, and the other on the window-sill. Then they could slide down.

Instantly, every aristocrat set to work, with knife, or piece of tin, or small coin, to take out the silver screws which held down one of the boards.

"It is very narrow," said the Head-boy. "I am afraid we shall slip off."

"Oh, there is no danger of that," replied the Smart-boy.

"If we only go fast enough, we cannot slip off. We will grease the board, and then we shall go fast enough."

So the board was taken up, and, after having been well greased with oil from the lamps, was put out of the window.

Then the boys, one at a time, got on the board and slid, with the speed of lightning, to the ground. Most of them came down with such rapidity and force that they shot over the smooth grass to a considerable distance. As soon as they were all down, the Smart-boy took the end of the board and moved it to one side, so that it rested on the edge of a deep tank.

"Now, then," said he, "if any of the guards slide down after us, they will go into the tank."

It was now nearly dark, and the boys set about finding some place where they could spend the night. They soon came to a large building, the doors of which were shut, but, as they were not locked, they had no trouble in entering. This building was a public library, which was closed very early every afternoon, and opened very late every morning. Here the aristocrats found very comfortable quarters, and having lighted a candle which one of them had in his pocket, they held a meeting, to determine what they should do next.

"Of course the ship will come back, some day," said the Smart-boy, "for that admiral would be afraid to go home without us. The giant would smash him and his old ship if he did that. So we shall have to wait here until the ship returns."

"But how are we going to live?" asked several of his companions.

"We can sleep here," he answered. "It 's a nice, big place, and nobody will ever disturb us, for a notice on the door says it 's closed two hours before sunset. And as to victuals, we shall have to work at something."

This was thought good reasoning, and they now began to consider what they should work at. It was agreed that it would be wise for them all to select the same trade, because then they could stand by each other in case of any business disputes, and their trade was to be chosen in this way: Every boy was to write on a piece of paper the business he liked best, and whatever trade or profession was written on the most papers, was to be adopted by the whole company.

When the papers were read by the Head-boy, it was found that nearly every one had selected a different calling; but three of the smaller boys happened to want to be letter-carriers, and so, as there was no business which had so many votes as this, it was determined that they should all be letter-carriers.

The three little boys shouted for joy at this.

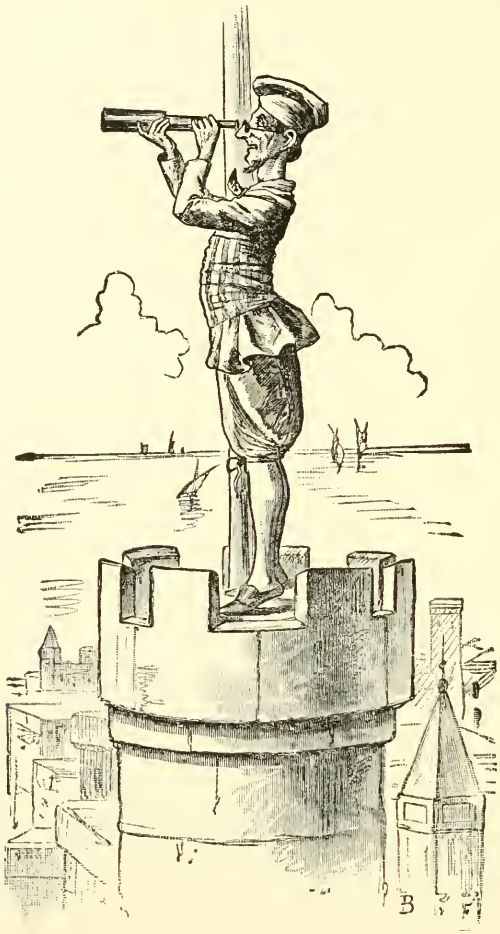
"But where shall we get letters to carry?" asked some of the older fellows.

"Oh, we 'll see about that in the morning," said the Smart-boy. "There 'll be plenty of time before the library opens."

They slept that night on piles of parchments, and in the morning the building was searched to see if any letters could be found for them to carry. In the cellar they discovered a great many huge boxes, filled with manuscripts which had been collecting ever since the city was first wound up and started. These, they concluded, would do just as well as letters, and each boy filled his satchel with them, and started off to deliver them.

Each carrier was assigned by the Head-boy to a different street, and all went to work with a will. The people were glad to get the manuscripts, for many of them were very instructive and interesting, and they gave the boys a small piece of money for each one. This went on, day after day, and every morning each person in the whole city got a letter.

When the king was informed of the escape of his prisoners, he hurried, in great trouble, to see how they had got away. But



THE WATCH ON THE HIGH TOWER.

when he saw the board which they had left resting on the edge of the tank, he was delighted.

"Those wretched Bagists," he exclaimed, "in trying to escape, have all slid into the tank. Let it be walled over, and that will be the end of them. We are fortunate to get rid of them so easily."

But the watch on the high tower was still kept up, for no one knew when the ship might come back with more Bagists.

One day, as the Head-boy was delivering his letters, he met

THE SCHOOL-MASTER AND HEAD-BOY EMBRACE.

an old man, whom he instantly recognized as his master. At first, he felt like running away; but when the master told him that he was alone, and forgave everything, they embraced in tears. The old man had not been able to find his boys in the town, and had wandered into the surrounding country. In this way, he had never had a letter.

The Head-boy took him to the library that night, and he afterward spent most of his time reading the old manuscripts

and sorting them out for the carriers. Nobody ever came into the cellar to disturb him.

The people of the city were very much benefited by the instructive papers which were brought to them every day, and many of them became quite learned. The aristocrats also learned a great deal by reading the papers to those persons who could not read themselves, and, every evening, the master gave them lessons in the library. So they gradually became better and better educated.

They often looked up to the high tower, because they had heard that a flag was to be hoisted there whenever a ship with a pink-and-blue sail was seen approaching the city.

Ten years passed, and they saw no flag, but one day they saw, posted up all over the city, a notice from the king, stating that, on the next day, the city would run down, and ordering all the people to retire into their houses, and to shut up their doors and windows. This struck the aristocrats with dismay, for how were they to get a living if they could not deliver their letters?

So they all boldly marched to the palace, and, asking for the king, proposed to him that they should be allowed to wind up his city.

The king gazed upon them in amazement. "What!" he cried. "Do you letter carriers venture to come to me with such a bold request? Do you think for a moment that you know anything about what you propose doing?"

"We can do it a great deal easier than we did it before," said one of the younger aristocrats, "for some of us were very small then, and did n't weigh much."

"Did it before?" exclaimed the bewildered king, staring at the sturdy group before him.

The Head-boy, who was by this time entirely grown up, now

came forward, and, acknowledging that he and his companions were the boys who had been shut up in the luxurious apartment, told their whole story since their escape.

"And you have lived among us all this time, and have not tried to bag our heads?" said the king.

"Not a bit of it," replied the other.

"I am very glad, indeed, to hear this," said the king, "and now, if you please, I would like you to try if you really can wind us up, for I feel that I am running down very fast."

At this, the whole body of aristocrats ran to the great stair-way, and began quickly to mount the steps. Around and around went the revolving stair-way, twice as fast as it had ever gone before. Click! click! click! went the machinery, and before anybody could really imagine that the thing was true, the stair-way stopped with a bump, and the city was wound up for another ten years!

It would be useless to try to describe the joy and gratitude of the king and the people. The aristocrats were loaded with honors and presents; they and their old master were sumptuously lodged in the palace, and, in their honor, the public library was ordered to be kept open every evening, in order that the people who were busy in the day-time might go there and read the papers, which were no longer carried to them.

At the end of a year, a flag was raised on the top of the high tower, and the admiral's ship came in. The philosophers took off their bags, which were now very old and thin, and the aristocrats, with their master, were warmly welcomed on board. Being all grown up, they were no longer feared. In a few days, the ship sailed for Nassimia, and, as the aristocrats were taking leave of the sorrowing citizens, the Smart-boy stepped up to the king, and said:

"I 'll tell you what I should do, if I were you. About a week before the time you expect to run down again, I 'd make a lot of men go to work and wind up the city. You can do it yourselves, just as well as to wait for other people to do it for you."

"That's exactly what I will do!" cried the king. "I never thought of it before!"

He did it, and, so far as is known, the city is running yet.

When the aristocrats reached the city of Nassimia, everybody was glad to see them, for they had become a fine, well-behaved, and well-educated body of nobility, and the admiral, standing high upon his stilts, looked down upon them with honest pride, as he presented them to the king and queen.

Lorilla shook each one of them by the hand. They did not recognize the little fairy in this handsome woman, but when she explained how the change had taken place, they were delighted.

"To think of it!" cried one of the younger aristocrats. "We never missed that bottle-washer!"

"No," said Lorilla; "nobody ever missed her. That is one reason why she was such a good one to be made a fairy. And now you must tell us your whole story."

And so the king and the queen, the giant and his army, the chancellor of the exchequer, and as many of the populace as could get near enough, crowded around to hear the story of the adventures of the aristocrats, which the Head-boy told very well.

"I should like very much to go to that curious city," said Lorilla, "especially at a time when it had run down, and everything had stopped."

"Oh, I don't believe it will ever stop any more," cried the Tail-boy. "We told them how to keep themselves a-going all the time."

THE REFORMED PIRATE.

IT was a very delightful country where little Corette lived. It seemed to be almost always summer-time there, for the winters were just long enough to make people glad when they were over. When it rained, it mostly rained at night, and so the fields and gardens had all the water they wanted, while the people were generally quite sure of a fine day. And, as they lived a great deal out-of-doors, this was a great advantage to them.

The principal business of the people of this country was the raising of sweet marjoram. The soil and climate were admirably adapted to the culture of the herb, and fields and fields of it were to be seen in every direction. At that time, and this was a good while ago, very little sweet marjoram was raised in other parts of the world, so this country had the trade nearly all to itself.

The great holiday of the year was the day on which the harvest of this national herb began. It was called "Sweet Marjoram Day," and the people, both young and old, thought more of it than of any other holiday in the year.

On that happy day everybody went out into the fields. There was never a person so old, or so young, or so busy, that he or she could not go to help in the harvest. Even when there were sick people, which was seldom, they were carried out to the fields and staid there all day. And they generally felt much better in the evening.

There were always patches of sweet marjoram planted on purpose for the very little babies to play in on the great day. They must be poor, indeed, these people said, if they could not raise sweet marjoram for their own needs and for exportation, and yet have enough left for the babies to play in.

So, all this day the little youngsters rolled, and tumbled, and kicked and crowed in the soft green and white beds of the fragrant herb, and pulled it up by the roots, and laughed and chuckled, and went to sleep in it, and were the happiest babies in the world.

THE BABIES IN THE SWEET MARJORAM BEDS.

They needed no care, except at the dinner hour, so the rest of the people gave all their time to gathering in the crop and having fun. There was always lots of fun on this great harvest day, for everybody worked so hard that the whole crop was generally in the sweet marjoram barns before breakfast, so that they had nearly the whole day for games and jolity.

In this country, where little Corette lived, there were fairies. Not very many of them, it is true, for the people had never seen but two. These were sisters, and there were never fairies more generally liked than these two little creatures, neither of them over four inches high. They were very fond of the company of human beings, and were just as full of fun as anybody. They often used to come to spend an hour or two, and sometimes a whole day, with the good folks, and they seemed always glad to see and to talk to everybody.

These sisters lived near the top of a mountain in a fairy cottage. This cottage had never been seen by any of the people, but the sisters had often told them all about it. It must have been a charming place.

The house was not much bigger than a bandbox, and it had two stories and a garret, with a little portico running all around it. Inside was the dearest little furniture of all kinds,—beds, tables, chairs, and all the furniture that could possibly be needed.

Everything about the house and grounds was on the same small scale. There was a little stable and a little barn, with a little old man to work the little garden and attend to the two little cows. Around the house were garden-beds ever so small, and little graveled paths; and a kitchen-garden, where the peas climbed up little sticks no bigger than pins, and where the little chickens, about the size of flies, sometimes got in and scratched up the little vegetables. There was a little meadow for pasture, and a grove of little trees; and there was also a small field of sweet marjoram, where the blossoms were so tiny that you could hardly have seen them without a magnifying glass.

It was not very far from this cottage to the sweet marjoram country, and the fairy sisters had no trouble at all in running down there whenever they felt like it, but none of the people had ever

seen this little home. They had looked for it, but could not find it, and the fairies would never take any of them to it. They said it was no place for human beings. Even the smallest boy, if he were to trip his toe, might fall against their house and knock it over; and as to any of them coming into the fairy grounds, that would be impossible, for there was no spot large enough for even a common-sized baby to creep about in.

On Sweet Marjoram Day the fairies never failed to come. Every year they taught the people new games, and all sorts of new ways of having fun. The good folks would never have even thought of having such fine times if it had not been for these fairies.

One delightful afternoon, about a month before Sweet Marjoram Day, Corette, who was a little girl just old enough, and not a day too old (which is exactly the age all little girls ought to be), was talking about the fairy cottage to some of her companions.

"We never can see it," said Corette, sorrowfully.

"No," said one of the other girls, "we are too big. If we were little enough, we might go."

"Are you sure the sisters would be glad to see us, then?" asked Corette.

"Yes, I heard them say so. But it does n't matter at all, as we are not little enough."

"No," said Corette, and she went off to take a walk by herself.

She had not walked far before she reached a small house which stood by the sea-shore. This house belonged to a Reformed Pirate who lived there all by himself. He had entirely given up a sea-faring life so as to avoid all temptation, and he employed his time in the mildest pursuits he could think of.

When Corette came to his house, she saw him sitting in an easy chair in front of his door, near the edge of a small bluff which overhung the sea, busily engaged in knitting a tidy.

When he saw Corette, he greeted her kindly, and put aside his knitting, which he was very glad to do, for he hated knitting tidies, though he thought it was his duty to make them.

"Well, my little maid," he said, in a strange, muffled voice, which sounded as if he were speaking under water, for he tried to be as gentle in every way as he could, "how do you do? You don't look quite as gay as usual. Has anything run afoul of you?"

"Oh no!" said Corette, and she came and stood by him, and taking up his tidy, she looked it over carefully and showed him where he had dropped a lot of stitches and where he had made some too tight and others a great deal too loose. He did not know how to knit very well.

When she had shown him as well as she could how he ought to do it, she sat down on the grass by his side, and after a while she began to talk to him about the fairy cottage, and what a great pity it was that it was impossible for her ever to see it.

"It *is* a pity," said the Reformed Pirate. "I've heard of that cottage, and I'd like to see it myself. In fact, I'd like to go to see almost anything that was proper and quiet, so as to get rid of the sight of this everlasting knitting."

"There are other things you might do besides knit," said Corette.

"Nothing so depressing and suitable," said he, with a sigh.

"It would be of no use for you to think of going there," said Corette. "Even I am too large, and you are ever and ever so much too big. You could n't get one foot into any of their paths."

"I've no doubt that's true," he replied; "but the thing might be done. Almost anything can be done if you set about it in the right way. But you see, little maid, that you and I don't know enough. Now, years ago, when I was in a different line of business,

I often used to get puzzled about one thing or another, and then I went to somebody who knew more than myself."

"Were there many such persons?" asked Corette.

"Well, no. I always went to one old fellow who was a Practicing Wizard. He lived, and still lives, I reckon, on an island about fifty miles from here, right off there to the sou'-sou'-west. I've no doubt that if we were to go to him, he'd tell us just how to do this thing."

"But how could we get there?" asked Corette.

"O!" I'd manage that," said the Reformed Pirate, his eyes flashing with animation. "I've an old sail-boat back there in the creek that's as good as ever she was. I could fix her up, and get everything all ship-shape in a couple of days, and then you and I could scud over there in no time. What do you say? Would n't you like to go?"

"Oh, I'd like to go ever so much!" cried Corette, clapping her hands, "if they'd let me."

"Well, run and ask them," said he, rolling up his knitting and stuffing it under the cushion of his chair, "and I'll go and look at that boat right away."

So Corette ran home to her father and mother, and told them all about the matter. They listened with great interest, and her father said:

"Well, now, our little girl is not looking quite as well as usual. I have noticed that she is somewhat pale. A sea-trip might be the very thing for her."

"I think it would do her a great deal of good," said her mother, "and as to that Reformed Pirate, she'd be just as safe with him as if she was on dry land."

So it was agreed that Corette should go. Her father and mother were always remarkably kind.

The Reformed Pirate was perfectly delighted when he heard this, and he went hard to work to get his little vessel ready. To sail again on the ocean seemed to him the greatest of earthly joys, and as he was to do it for the benefit of a good little girl, it was all perfectly right and proper.

When they started, the next day but one, all the people who lived near enough came down to see them off. Just as they were about to sail, the Reformed Pirate said:

"Hello! I wonder if I had n't better run back to the house and get my sword! I only wear the empty scabbard now, but it might be safer, on a trip like this, to take the sword along."

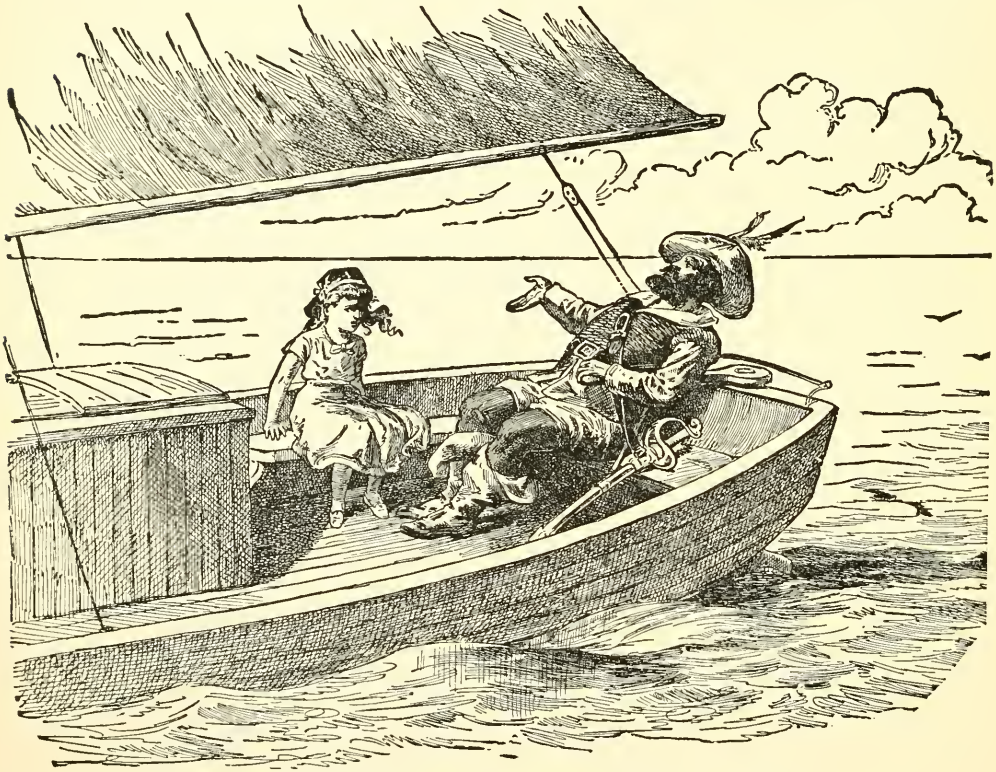
So he ran back and got it, and then he pushed off amid the shouts of all the good people on the beach.

The boat was quite a good-sized one, and it had a cabin and everything neat and comfortable. The Reformed Pirate managed it beautifully, all by himself, and Corette sat in the stern and watched the waves, and the sky, and the sea-birds, and was very happy indeed.

As for her companion, he was in a state of ecstasy. As the breeze freshened, and the sails filled, and the vessel went dashing over the waves, he laughed and joked, and sang snatches of old sea-songs, and was the jolliest man afloat.

After a while, as they went thus sailing merrily along, a distant ship appeared in sight. The moment his eyes fell upon it, a sudden change came over the Reformed Pirate. He sprang to his feet and, with his hand still upon the helm, he leaned forward and gazed at the ship. He gazed and he gazed, and he gazed without saying a word. Corette spoke to him several times, but he answered not. And as he gazed he moved the helm so that his little craft gradually turned from her course, and sailed to meet the distant ship.

As the two vessels approached each other, the Reformed Pirate became very much excited. He tightened his belt and loosened his sword in its sheath. Hurriedly giving the helm to Corette, he went forward and jerked a lot of ropes and hooks from a cubby-hole where they had been stowed away. Then he



THE REFORMED PIRATE IS THE JOLLIEST MAN AFLOAT.

pulled out a small, dark flag, with bits of skeleton painted on it, and hoisted it to the top-mast.

By this time he had nearly reached the ship, which was a

large three-masted vessel. There seemed to be a great commotion on board; sailors were running this way and that; women were screaming; and officers could be heard shouting, "Put her about! Clap on more sail!"

But steadily on sailed the small boat, and the moment it came alongside the big ship, the Reformed Pirate threw out grapnels and made the two vessels fast together. Then he hooked a ropeladder to the side of the ship, and rushing up it, sprang with a yell on the deck of the vessel, waving his flashing sword around his head!

"Down, dastards! varlets! hounds!" he shouted. "Down upon your knees! Throw down your arms! SURRENDER!"

Then every man went down upon his knees, and threw down his arms and surrendered.

"Where is your Captain?" roared their conqueror.

The Captain came trembling forward.

"Bring to me your gold and silver, your jewels and your precious stones, and your rich stuffs!"

The Captain ordered these to be quickly brought and placed before the Reformed Pirate, who continued to stride to and fro across the deck waving his glittering blade, and who, when he saw the treasures placed before him, shouted again.

"Prepare for scuttling!" and then, while the women got down on their knees and begged that he would not sink the ship, and the children cried, and the men trembled so that they could hardly kneel straight, and the Captain stood pale and shaking before him, he glanced at the pile of treasure, and touched it with his sword.

"Aboard with this, my men!" he said. "But first I will divide this into,—into,—into *one* part. Look here!" and then he paused, glanced around, and clapped his hand to his head. He looked

at the people, the treasure and the ship. Then suddenly he sheathed his sword, and, stepping up to the Captain, extended his hand.

"Good sir," said he, "you must excuse me. This is a mistake. I had no intention of taking this vessel. It was merely a temporary absence of mind. I forgot I had reformed, and seeing this ship, old scenes and my old business came into my head, and I just came and took the vessel without really thinking what I was doing. I beg you will excuse me. And these ladies,—I am very sorry to have inconvenienced them. I ask them to overlook my unintentional rudeness."

"Oh, don't mention it!" cried the Captain, his face beaming with joy as he seized the hand of the Reformed Pirate. "It is of no importance, I assure you. We are delighted, sir, delighted!"

"Oh yes!" cried all the ladies. "Kind sir, we are charmed! We are charmed!"

"You are all very good indeed," said the Reformed Pirate, "but I really think I was not altogether excusable. And I am very sorry that I made your men bring up all these things."

"Not at all! not at all!" cried the Captain. "No trouble whatever to show them. Very glad indeed to have the opportunity. By the by, would you like to take a few of them, as a memento of your visit?"

"Oh no, I thank you," replied the Reformed Pirate, "I would rather not."

"Perhaps, then, some of your men might like a trinket or a bit of cloth——"

"Oh, I have no men! There is no one on board but myself —excepting a little girl, who is a passenger. But I must be going. Good-by, Captain!"

"I am sorry you are in such a hurry," said the Captain. "Is there anything at all that I can do for you?"

"No, thank you. But stop!—there may be something. Do you sail to any port where there is a trade in tidies?"

"Oh, yes! To several such," said the Captain.

"Well, then, I would be very much obliged to you," said the Reformed Pirate, "if you would sometimes stop off that point of land that you see there, and send a boat ashore to my house for a load of tidies."

"You manufacture them by the quantity, then?" asked the Captain.

"I expect to," said the other, sadly.

The Captain promised to stop, and, after shaking hands with every person on deck, the Reformed Pirate went down the side of the ship, and taking in his ladder and his grapnels, he pushed off.

As he slowly sailed away, having lowered his flag, the Captain looked over the side of his ship, and said:

"If I had only known that there was nobody but a little girl on board! I thought, of course, he had a boat-load of pirates."

Corette asked a great many questions about everything that had happened on the ship, for she had heard the noise and confusion as she sat below in the little boat; but her companion was disposed to be silent, and said very little in reply.

When the trip was over, and they had reached the island, the Reformed Pirate made his boat fast, and taking little Corette by the hand, he walked up to the house of the Practicing Wizard.

This was a queer place. It was a great rambling house, one story high in some places, and nine or ten in other places; and then, again, it seemed to run into the ground and re-appear at a short distance—the different parts being connected by cellars and basements, with nothing but flower-gardens over them.

Corette thought she had never seen such a wonderful building; but she had not long to look at the outside of it, for her

companion, who had been there before, and knew the ways of the place, went up to a little door in a two-story part of the house and knocked. Our friends were admitted by a dark cream-colored slave, who informed them that the Practicing Wizard was engaged with other visitors, but that he would soon be at leisure.

So Corette and the Reformed Pirate sat down in a handsome room, full of curious and wonderful things, and, in a short time, they were summoned into the Practicing Wizard's private office.

"Glad to see you," said he, as the reformed Pirate entered. "It has been a long time since you were here. What can I do for you, now? Want to know something about the whereabouts of any ships, or the value of any cargoes?"

"Oh, no! I'm out of that business now," said the other. "I've come this time for something entirely different. But I'll let this little girl tell you what it is. She can do it a great deal better than I can."

So Corette stepped up to the Practicing Wizard, who was a pleasant, elderly man, with a smooth white face, and a constant smile, which seemed to have grown on his face instead of a beard, and she told him the whole story of the fairy sisters and their cottage, of her great desire to see it, and of the difficulties in the way.

"I know all about those sisters," he said; "I don't wonder you want to see their house. You both wish to see it?"

"Yes," said the Reformed Pirate; "I might as well go with her, if the thing can be done at all."

"Very proper," said the Practicing Wizard, "very proper in deed. But there is only one way in which it can be done. You must be condensed."

"Does that hurt?" asked Corette.

"Oh, not at all! You'll never feel it. For the two it will be

one hundred and eighty ducats," said he, turning to the Reformed Pirate; "we make a reduction when there are more than one."

"Are you willing?" asked the Reformed Pirate of Corette, as he put his hand in his breeches' pocket.

"Oh, yes!" said Corette, "certainly I am, if that's the only way."

Whereupon her good friend said no more, but pulled out a hundred and eighty ducats and handed them to the Practicing Wizard, who immediately commenced operations.

Corette and the Reformed Pirate were each seated in a large easy chair, and upon each of their heads the old white-faced gentleman placed a little pink ball, about the size of a pea. Then he took a position in front of them.

"Now then," said he, "sit perfectly still. It will be over in a few minutes," and he lifted up a long thin stick, and, pointing it toward the couple, he began to count: "One, two, three, four ——"

As he counted, the Reformed Pirate and Corette began to shrink, and by the time he had reached fifty, they were no bigger than cats. But he kept on counting until Corette was about three and a half inches high, and her companion about five inches.

Then he stopped, and knocked the pink ball from each of their heads with a little tap of his long stick.

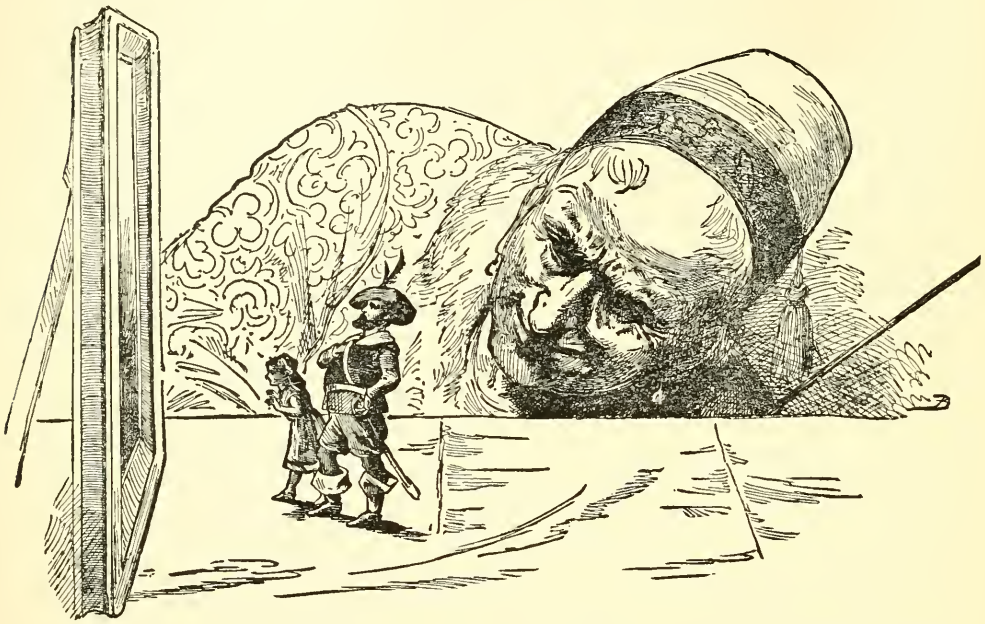
"There we are," said he, and he carefully picked up the little creatures and put them on a table in front of a looking-glass, that they might see how they liked his work.

It was admirably done. Every proportion had been perfectly kept.

"It seems to me that it could n't be better," said the Condensed Pirate, looking at himself from top to toe.

"No," said the Practicing Wizard, smiling rather more than usual, "I don't believe it could."

"But how are we to get away from here?" said Corette to her friend. "A little fellow like you can't sail that big boat."



"'IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT COULD N'T BE BETTER,' SAID THE CONDENSED PIRATE."

"No," replied he, ruefully, "that's true; I could n't do it. But perhaps, sir, you could condense the boat."

"Oh, no!" said the old gentleman, "that would never do. Such a little boat would be swamped before you reached shore, if a big fish did n't swallow you. No, I'll see that you get away safely."

So saying, he went to a small cage that stood in a window, and took from it a pigeon.

"This fellow will take you," said he. "He is very strong and swift, and will go ever so much faster than your boat."

Next he fastened a belt around the bird, and to the lower part of this he hung a little basket, with two seats in it. He then lifted Corette and the Condensed Pirate into the basket, where they sat down opposite one another.

"Do you wish to go directly to the cottage of the fairy sisters?" said the old gentleman.

"Oh, yes!" said Corette.

So he wrote the proper address on the bill of the pigeon, and opening the window, carefully let the bird fly.

"I'll take care of your boat," he cried to the Condensed Pirate, as the pigeon rose in the air. "You'll find it all right, when you come back."

And he smiled worse than ever.

The pigeon flew up to a great height, and then he took flight in a straight line for the Fairy Cottage, where he arrived before his passengers thought they had half finished their journey.

The bird alighted on the ground, just outside of the boundary fence; and when Corette and her companion had jumped from the basket, he rose and flew away home as fast as he could go.

The Condensed Pirate now opened a little gate in the fence, and he and Corette walked in. They went up the graveled path, and under the fruit-trees, where the ripe peaches and apples hung as big as peas, and they knocked at the door of the fairy sisters.

When these two little ladies came to the door, they were amazed to see Corette.

"Why, how did you ever?" they cried. "And if there is n't our old friend, the Reformed Pirate!"

"Condensed Pirate, if you please," said that individual. "There's no use of my being reformed while I'm so small as this. I could n't hurt anybody if I wanted to."

"Well, come right in, both of you," said the sisters, "and tell us all about it."

So they went in, and sat in the little parlor, and told their story. The fairies were delighted with the whole affair, and insisted on a long visit, to which our two friends were not at all opposed.

They found everything at this cottage exactly as they had been told. They ate the daintiest little meals off the daintiest little dishes, and they thoroughly enjoyed all the delightful little things in the little place. Sometimes, Corette and the fairies would take naps in little hammocks under the trees, while the Condensed Pirate helped the little man drive up the little cows, or work in the little garden.

On the second day of their visit, when they were all sitting on the little portico after supper, one of the sisters, thinking that the Condensed Pirate might like to have something to do, and knowing how he used to occupy himself, took from her basket a little half-knit tidy, with the needles in it, and asked him if he cared to amuse himself with that.

"No, MA'AM!" said he, firmly but politely. "Not at present. If I find it necessary to reform again, I may do something of the kind, but not now. But I thank you, all the same."

After this, they were all very careful not to mention tidies to him.

Corette and her companion stayed with the fairies for more than a week. Corette knew that her father and mother did not expect her at home for some time, and so she felt quite at liberty to stay as long as she pleased.

As to the sisters, they were delighted to have their visitors with them.

But, one day, the Condensed Pirate, finding Corette alone, led

her with great secrecy to the bottom of the pasture field, the very outskirts of the fairies' domain.

"Look here," said he, in his lowest tones. "Do you know, little Corette, that things are not as I expected them to be here? Everything is very nice and good, but nothing appears very small to me. Indeed, things seem to be just about the right size. How does it strike you?"

"Why, I have been thinking the same thing," said Corette. "The sisters used to be such dear, cunning little creatures, and now they're bigger than I am. But I don't know what can be done about it.

"I know," said the Condensed Pirate.

"What?" asked Corette.

"Condense 'em," answered her companion, solemnly.

"Oh! But you could n't do that!" exclaimed Corette.

"Yes, but I can—at least, I think I can. You remember those two pink condensing balls?"

"Yes," said Corette.

"Well, I've got mine."

"You have!" cried Corette. "How did you get it?"

"Oh! when the old fellow knocked it off my head, it fell on the chair beside me, and I picked it up and put it in my coat-pocket. It would just go in. He charges for the balls, and so I thought I might as well have it."

"But do you know how he works them?"

"Oh yes!" replied the Condensed Pirate. "I watched him. What do you say? Shall we condense this whole place?"

"It won't hurt them," said Corette, "and I don't really think they would mind it."

"Mind it! No!" said the other. "I believe they'd like it."

So it was agreed that the Fairy Cottage, inmates and grounds

should be condensed until they were, relatively, as small as they used to be.

That afternoon, when the sisters were taking a nap, and the little man was at work in the barn, the Condensed Pirate went up into the garret of the cottage and got out on the roof. Then he climbed to the top of the tallest chimney, which overlooked everything on the place, and there he laid his little pink ball.

He then softly descended, and, taking Corette by the hand, (she had been waiting for him on the portico), he went down to the bottom of the pasture field.

When he was quite sure that he and Corette were entirely outside of the fairies' grounds, he stood up, pointed to the ball with a long, thin stick which he had cut, and began to count: "One, two, three ——"

And as he counted the cottage began to shrink. Smaller and smaller it became, until it got to be very little indeed.

"Is that enough?" said the Condensed Pirate, hurriedly, between two counts.

"No," replied Corette. "There is the little man, just come out of the barn. He ought to be as small as the sisters used to be. I'll tell you when to stop."

So the counting went on until Corette said, "Stop!" and the cottage was really not much higher than a thimble. The little man stood by the barn, and seemed to Corette to be just about the former size of the fairy sisters; but, in fact, he was not quite a quarter of an inch high. Everything on the place was small in proportion, so that when Corette said "Stop!" the Condensed Pirate easily leaned over and knocked the pink ball from the chimney with his long stick. It fell outside of the grounds, and he picked it up and put it in his pocket.

Then he and Corette stood and admired everything! It was

charming! It was just what they had imagined before they came there. While they were looking with delight at the little fields, and trees, and chickens,—so small that really big people could not have seen them,—and at the cute little house, with its vines and portico, the two sisters came out on the little lawn.

When they saw Corette and her companion, they were astounded.

"Why, when did you grow big again?" they cried. "Oh! how sorry we are! Now you cannot come into our house and live with us any longer."

Corette and the Condensed Pirate looked at each other, as much as to say, "They don't know they have been made so little."

Then Corette said: "We are sorry too. I suppose we shall have to go away now. But we have had a delightful visit."

"It has been a charming one for us," said one of the sisters, "and if we only had known, we would have had a little party before you went away; but now it is too late."

The Condensed Pirate said nothing. He felt rather guilty about the matter. He might have waited a little, and yet he could not have told them about it. They might have objected to be condensed.

"May we stay just a little while and look at things?" asked Corette.

"Yes," replied one of the fairies; "but you must be very careful not to step inside the grounds, or to stumble over on our place. You might do untold damage."

So the two little big people stood and admired the fairy cottage and all about it, for this was indeed the sight they came to see; and then they took leave of their kind entertainers, who would have been glad to have them stay longer, but were really trembling

with apprehension lest some false step or careless movement might ruin their little home.

As Corette and the Condensed Pirate took their way through the woods to their home, they found it very difficult to get along, they were so small. When they came to a narrow stream, which Corette would once have jumped over with ease, the Condensed Pirate had to make a ferry-boat of a piece of bark, and paddle himself and the little girl across.

"I wonder how the fairies used to come down to us," said Corette, who was struggling along over the stones and moss, hanging on to her companion's hand.

"Oh! I expect they have a nice smooth path somewhere through the woods, where they can run along as fast as they please; and bridges over the streams."

"Why did n't they tell us of it?" asked Corette.

"They thought it was too little to be of any use to us. Don't you see?—they think we're big people and would n't need their path."

"Oh, yes!" said Corette.

In time, however, they got down the mountain and out of the woods, and then they climbed up on one of the fences and ran along the top of it toward Corette's home.

When the people saw them, they cried out: "Oh, here come our dear little fairies, who have not visited us for so many days!" But when they saw them close at hand, and perceived that they were little Corette and the Pirate who had reformed, they were dumbfounded.

Corette did not stop to tell them anything; but still holding her companion's hand, she ran on to her parents' house, followed by a crowd of neighbors.

Corette's father and mother could hardly believe that this little

being was their daughter, but there was no mistaking her face and her clothes, and her voice, although they were all so small; and when she had explained the matter to them, and to the people who filled the house, they understood it all. They were overcome with joy to have their daughter back again, little or big.

When the Condensed Pirate went to his house, he found the door locked, as he had left it, but he easily crawled in through a crack. He found everything of an enormous size. It did not look like the old place. He climbed up the leg of a chair and got on a table, by the help of the table-cloth, but it was hard work. He found something to eat and drink, and all his possessions were in order, but he did not feel at home.

Days passed on, and while the Condensed Pirate did not feel any better satisfied, a sadness seemed to spread over the country, and particularly over Corette's home. The people grieved that they never saw the fairy sisters, who indeed had made two or three visits, with infinite trouble and toil, but who could not make themselves observed, their bodies and their voices being so very small.

And Corette's father and mother grieved. They wanted their daughter to be as she was before. They said that Sweet Marjoram Day was very near, but that they could not look forward to it with pleasure. Corette might go out to the fields, but she could only sit upon some high place, as the fairies used to sit. She could not help in the gathering. She could not even be with the babies; they would roll on her and crush her. So they mourned.

It was now the night before the great holiday. Sweet Marjoram Eve had not been a very gay time, and the people did not expect to have much fun the next day. How could they if the fairy sisters did not come? Corette felt badly, for she had never told that the sisters had been condensed, and the Condensed Pi-

rate, who had insisted on her secrecy, felt worse. That night he lay in his great bed, really afraid to go to sleep on account of rats and mice.

He was so extremely wakeful that he lay and thought, and thought, and thought for a long time, and then he got up and dressed and went out.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, and he made his way directly to Corette's house. There, by means of a vine, he climbed up to her window, and gently called her. She was not sleeping well, and she soon heard him and came to the window.

He then desired her to bring him two spools of fine thread.

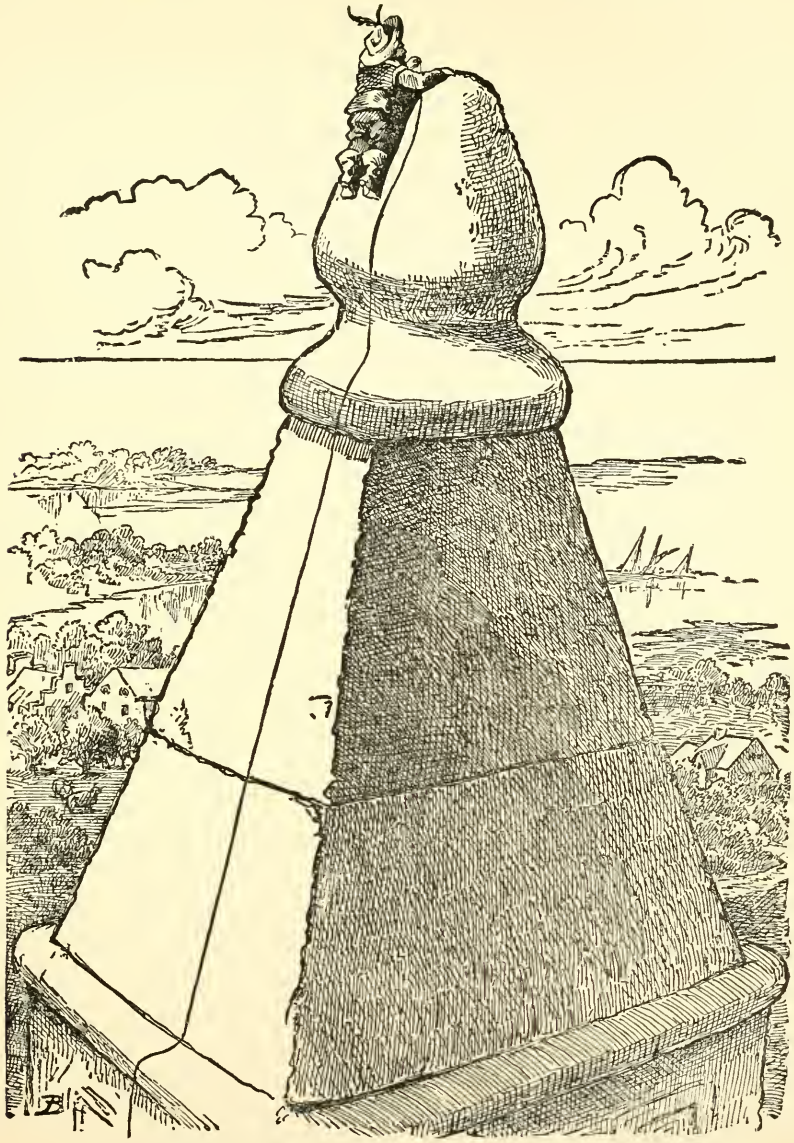
Without asking any questions, she went for the thread, and very soon made her appearance at the window with one spool in her arms, and then she went back for another.

"Now, then," said the Condensed Pirate, when he had thrown the spools down to the ground, "will you dress yourself and wait here at the window until I come and call for you?"

Corette promised, for she thought he had some good plan in his head, and he hurried down the vine, took up a spool under each arm, and bent his way to the church. This building had a high steeple which overlooked the whole country. He left one of his spools outside, and then, easily creeping with the other under one of the great doors, he carried it with infinite pains and labor up into the belfry.

There he tied it on his back, and getting out of a window, began to climb up the outside of the steeple.

It was not hard for him to do this, for the rough stones gave him plenty of foot-hold, and he soon stood on the very tip-top of the steeple. He then took tight hold of one end of the thread on his spool and let the spool drop. The thread rapidly unrolled, and the spool soon touched the ground.



THE CONDENSED PIRATE CLIMBS UP THE OUTSIDE OF THE STEEPLE.

Now our friend took from his pocket the pink ball, and passing the end of the thread through a little hole in the middle of it, he tied it firmly. Placing the ball in a small depression on the top of the steeple, he left it there, with the thread hanging from it, and rapidly descended to the ground. There he took the other spool and tied the end of its thread to that which was hanging from the steeple.

He now put down the spool and ran to call Corette. When she heard his voice, she clambered down the vine to him.

"Now, Corette," he said, "run to my house and stand on the beach, near the water, and wait for me."

Corette ran off as he had asked, and he went back to his spool. He took it up and walked slowly to his house, carefully unwinding the thread as he went. The church was not very far from the sea-shore, so he soon joined Corette. With her assistance he then unwound the rest of the thread, and made a little coil. He next gave the coil to Corette to hold, cautioning her to be very careful, and then he ran off to where some bits of wood were lying, close to the water's edge. Selecting a little piece of thin board, he pushed it into the water, and taking a small stick in his hand, he jumped on it, and poled it along to where Corette was standing. The ocean here formed a little bay where the water was quite smooth.

"Now, Corette," said the Condensed Pirate, "we must be very careful. I will push this ashore, and you must step on board, letting out some of the thread as you come. Be sure not to pull it tight. Then I will paddle out a little way, and as I push, you must let out more thread."

Corette did as she was directed, and very soon they were standing on the little raft a few yards from shore. Then her companion put down his stick, and took the coil of thread.

"What are you going to do?" asked Corette. She had wanted to ask before, but there did not seem to be time.

"Well," said he, "we can't make ourselves any bigger—at least, I don't know how to do it, and so I'm going to condense the whole country. The little pink ball is on top of the steeple, which is higher than anything else about here, you know. I can't knock the ball off at the proper time, so I've tied a thread to it to pull it off. You and I are outside of the place, on the water, so we won't be made any smaller. If the thing works, everybody will be our size, and all will be right again."

"Splendid!" cried Corette. "But how will you know when things are little enough?"

"Do you see that door in my house, almost in front of us? Well, when I was of the old size, I used just to touch the top of that door with my head, if I did n't stoop. When you see that the door is about my present height, tell me to stop. Now then!"

The Condensed Pirate began to count, and instantly the whole place, church, houses, fields, and of course the people who were in bed, began to shrink! He counted a good while before Corette thought his door would fit him. At last she called to him to stop. He glanced at the door to feel sure, counted one more, and pulled the thread. Down came the ball, and the size of the place was fixed!

The whole of the sweet marjoram country was now so small that the houses were like bandboxes, and the people not more than four or five inches high—excepting some very tall people who were six inches.

Drawing the ball to him, the Condensed Pirate pushed out some distance, broke it from the thread, and threw it into the water.

"No more condensing!" said he. He then paddled himself

and Corette ashore, and running to his cottage, threw open the door and looked about him. Everything was just right! Everything fitted! He shouted with joy.

It was just daybreak when Corette rushed into her parents' house. Startled by the noise, her father and mother sprang out of bed.

"Our daughter! Our darling daughter!" they shouted, "and she has her proper size again!!"

In an instant she was clasped in their arms.

When the first transports of joy were over, Corette sat down and told them the whole story—told them everything.

"It is all right," said her mother, "so that we are all of the same size," and she shed tears of joy.

Corette's father ran out to ring the church-bell, so as to wake up the people and tell them the good news of his daughter's restoration. When he came in, he said:

"I see no difference in anything. Everybody is all right."

There never was such a glorious celebration of Sweet Marjoram Day as took place that year.

The crop was splendid, the weather was more lovely than usual, if such a thing could be, and everybody was in the gayest humor.

But the best thing of all was the appearance of the fairy sisters. When they came among the people, they all shouted as if they had gone wild. And the good little sisters were so overjoyed that they could scarcely speak.

"What a wonderful thing it is to find that we have grown to our old size again! We were here several times lately, but somehow or other we seemed to be so very small that we could n't make you see or hear us. But now it's all right. We have forty-two new games!"

And at that, the crop being all in, the whole country, with a shout of joy, went to work to play.

There were no gayer people to be seen than Corette and the Condensed Pirate. Some of his friends called this good man by his old name, but he corrected them.

"I am reformed, all the same," he said, "but do not call me by that name. I shall never be able to separate it from its associations with tidies. And with *them* I am done for ever. Owing to circumstances, I do not need to be depressed."

The captain of the ship never stopped off the coast for a load of tidies. Perhaps he did not care to come near the house of his former captor, for fear that he might forget himself again, and take the ship a second time. But if the captain had come, it is not likely that his men would have found the cottage of the Condensed Pirate, unless they had landed at the very spot where it stood.

And it so happened that no one ever noticed this country after it was condensed. Passing ships could not come near enough to see such a very little place, and there never were any very good roads to it by land.

But the people continued to be happy and prosperous, and they kept up the celebration of Sweet Marjoram Day as gayly as when they were all ordinary-sized people.

In the whole country there were only two persons, Corette and the Pirate, who really believed that they were condensed.

HUCKLEBERRY.

MORE than a hundred and sixty-eight years ago, there lived a curious personage called "Old Riddler." His real name was unknown to the people in that part of the country where he dwelt; but this made no difference, for the name given him was probably just as good as his own. Indeed, I am quite sure that it was better, for it meant something, and very few people have names that mean anything.

He was called Old Riddler for two reasons. In the first place, he was an elderly man; secondly, he was the greatest fellow to ask riddles that you ever heard of. So this name fitted him very well.

Old Riddler had some very peculiar characteristics,—among others, he was a gnome. Living underground for the greater part of his time, he had ample opportunities of working out curious and artful riddles, which he used to try on his fellow-gnomes; and if they liked them, he would go above ground and propound his conundrums to the country people, who sometimes guessed them, but not often.

The fact is, that those persons who wished to be on good terms with the old gnome never guessed his riddles. They knew that they would please him better by giving them up.

He took such a pleasure in telling the answers to his riddles that no truly kind-hearted person would deprive him of it by trying to solve them

"You see," as Old Riddler used to say, when talked to on the subject, "if I take all the trouble to make up these riddles, it's no more than fair that I should be allowed to give the answers."

So the old gnome, who was not much higher than a two-year old child, though he had quite a venerable head and face, was very much encouraged by the way the people treated him, and when a person happened to be very kind and appreciative, and gave a good deal of attention to one of his conundrums, that person would be pretty sure, before long, to feel glad that he had met Old Riddler.

There were thousands of ways in which the gnomes could benefit the country-folks, especially those who had little farms or gardens. Sometimes Old Riddler, who was a person of great influence in his tribe, would take a company of gnomes under the garden of some one to whom he wished to do a favor, and they would put their little hands up through the earth and pull down all the weeds, root-foremost, so that when the owner went out in the morning, he would find his garden as clear of weeds as the bottom of a dinner-plate.

Of course, any one who has habits of this kind must eventually become a general favorite, and this was the case with Old Riddler.

One day he made up a splendid riddle, and, after he had told it to all the gnomes, he hurried up to propound it to some human person.

He was in such haste that he actually forgot his hat, although it was late in the fall, and he wore his cloak. He had not gone far through the fields before he met a young goose-girl, named Lois. She was a poor girl, and was barefooted; and as Old Riddler saw her in her scanty dress, standing on the cold ground, watching her geese, he thought to himself: "Now I do hope that

girl has wit enough to understand my riddle, for I feel that I would like to get interested in her."

So, approaching Lois, he made a bow and politely asked her: "Can you tell me, my good little girl, why a ship full of sailors, at the bottom of the sea, is like the price of beef?"

The goose-girl began to scratch her head, through the old handkerchief she wore instead of a bonnet, and tried to think of the answer.

"Because it's 'low,'" said she, after a minute or two.

"Oh, no!" said the gnome. "That's not it. You can give it up, you know, if you can't think of the answer."

"I know!" said Lois. "Because it's sunk."

"Not at all," said Old Riddler, a little impatiently. "Now come, my good girl, you'd much better give it up. You will just hack at the answer until you make it good for nothing."

"Well, what is it?" said Lois.

"I will tell you," said the gnome. "Now, pay attention to the answer: Because it has gone down. Don't you see?" asked the old fellow, with a gracious smile.

"Yes, I see," said the goose-girl, scratching her head again; "but my answer was nearly as good as yours."

"Oh, dear me!" said Old Riddler, "that won't do. It's of no use at all to give an answer that is nearly good enough. It must be exactly right, or it's worthless. I am afraid, young girl, that you don't care much for riddles."

"Yes I do," said the goose girl; "I make 'em."

"Make them?" exclaimed Old Riddler, in great surprise.

"Yes," replied Lois, "I'm out here all day with these geese, and I have n't anything else to do, and so I make riddles. Do you want to hear one of them?"

"Yes, I would like it very much indeed," said the gnome.

"Well, then, here's one: "If the roofs of houses were flat instead of slanting, why would the rain be like a chained dog?"

"Give it up," said Old Riddler.

"'DON'T YOU SEE?' ASKED THE OLD FELLOW.

"Because it could n't run off," answered Lois.

"Very good, very good," said the gnome. "Why, that's nearly as good as some of mine. And now, my young friend, did n't you feel pleased to have me give up that riddle and let you tell me the answer, straight and true, just as you knew it ought to be?"

"Oh, yes!" said the goose-girl.

"Well, then," continued Old Riddler, "remember this: What pleases you will often please other people. And never guess another riddle."

Lois, although a rough country girl, was touched by the old man's earnestness and his gentle tones.

"I never will," said she.

"That's a very well-meaning girl," said Old Riddler to himself as he walked away, "although she has n't much polish. I'll come sometimes and help her a little with her conundrums."

Old Riddler had a son named Huckleberry. He was a smart, bright young fellow, and resembled his father in many respects. When he went home, the old gnome told his son about Lois, and tried to impress on his mind the same lesson he had taught the young girl. Huckleberry was a very good little chap, but he was quick-witted and rather forward, and often made his father very angry by guessing his riddles; and so he needed a good deal of parental counsel.

Nearly all that night Huckleberry thought about what his father had told him. But not at all as Old Riddler intended he should.

"What a fine thing it must be," said Huckleberry to himself, "to go out into the world and teach people things. I'm going to try it myself."

So, the next day, he started off on his mission. The first person he saw was a very small girl playing under a big oak-tree.

When the small girl saw the young gnome, she was frightened and drew back, standing up as close against the tree as she could get.

But up stepped Master Huckleberry, with all the airs and graces he could command.

"Can you tell me, my little miss," said he, "why an elephant with a glass globe of gold-fish tied to his tail is like a monkey with one pink eye and one of a mazarine blue?"

"No," said the small girl, "I don't know. Go away!"

"Oh," said Huckleberry, "perhaps that's too hard for you. I know some nice little ones, in words of one syllable. Why is a red man with a green hat like a good boy who has a large duck in a small pond?"

"Go away!" said the small girl. "I came here to pick flowers. I don't know riddles."

"Perhaps that one was too easy," said Huckleberry, kindly. "I have all sorts. Here is one with longer words, divided into syllables. I'll say it slowly for you: What is the dif-fer-ence between a mag-nan-i-mous ship-mate and the top-most leaf-let on your grand-mo-ther's bar-ber-ry bush?"

"I have n't got any grandmother," said she.

"Oh, well!" any grandmother will do," said Huckleberry.

"I can't guess it," said the small girl, who was now beginning to lose her fear of the funny little fellow. "I never guessed any riddles. I'm not old enough."

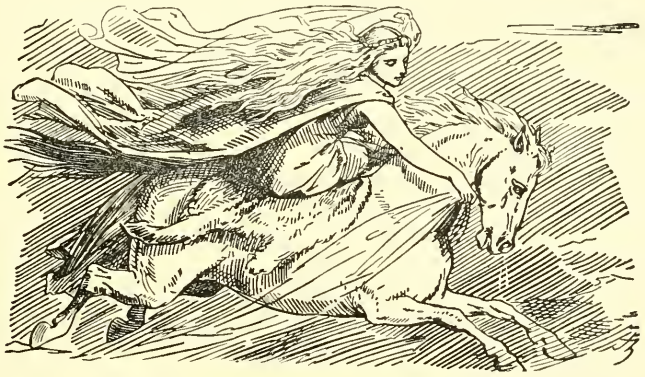
"Very well, then," said Huckleberry, "I'll tell you what I'll do. Let's sit down here under the tree, and I'll tell you one of father's riddles, and give you the answer. His riddles are better than mine, because none of mine have any answers. I don't put answers to them, for I can never think of any good ones. I met a boy once, and told him a lot of my riddles; and he learned them and went about asking people to guess them; and when the people gave them up, he could n't tell them the answers, because there were none, and that made everybody mad. He told one of the riddles to his grandmother,—I think it was the one about the pink-eyed monkey and the wagon-load of beans——"

"No," said the small girl; "the elephant and the gold-fish was the other part of the pink-eyed monkey one."

THE BOY AND HIS GRANDMOTHER.

"Oh, it don't make any difference," said Huckleberry. "I don't join my riddles together the same way every time. Sometimes I use the gold-fish and elephant with the last part of one riddle, and sometimes with another. As there's no answer, it don't matter. I begin a good many of my best riddles with the elephant, for it makes a fine opening. But, as I was going to tell you, this boy told one of my riddles to his grandmother, and she liked it very much; but when she found out that there was no answer to it, she gave him a good box on the ear, and that boy has never liked me since. But now I'll tell you a story. That is, it's like a story, but it's really a riddle. Father made it, and everybody thinks it's one of his best. There was once a fair lady of renown who was engaged to be married to a prince. And when the wedding-day came round—they were to be married in one of the

prince's palaces in the mountains—she was so long getting dressed—you see she dressed in one of her father's palaces, down in the valley—that she was afraid she would be late; so as soon as her veil was pinned on, she ran down to the stables, threw a wolf-skin on the back of one of the fieriest of the chargers, and springing on him, she dashed away. She was n't used to harnessing horses, and was in such a hurry that she forgot all about the bridle, and so, as she was dashing away, she found she could n't steer the



THE FAIR LADY OF RENOWN.

animal, and he did n't go any where near the prince's palace, but galloped on, and on, and on, every minute taking her farther and farther away from where she wanted to go. She could n't turn the charger, and she could n't stop him, though she tore off pieces of her veil and tried to put them around his nose, but it was no good. So when the wedding-party had waited, and waited, and waited, the prince got angry and married another lady, and nobody knows where the fair lady of renown went to, although there are some people who say that she's a-galloping yet, and trying to get her veil around the charger's nose. Now, why was it that that fair lady of renown never married? Answer: Be-

cause she had no bridal. You can say either bri-d-a-l or bri-d-l-e, because they both sound alike, and if she had had either one of them, she would have been married. This is a pretty long riddle, but it's easier than mine, because it's all fixed up right, with the answer to it and everything. You like it better than mine, don't you?"

The small girl did not answer, and when Huckleberry looked around, he saw that she was asleep.

"Poor little thing!" said Huckleberry, softly, to himself. "I guess I gave her a little too much riddle to begin with. Her mind is n't formed enough yet. But it's pretty hard on me. I wanted to teach somebody something, and here she's gone to sleep. I wish I could find that goose-girl. If father could teach her something, I'm sure I could."

So he went walking through the fields, and pretty soon he saw Lois, standing among her geese, who were feeding on the grass.

Huckleberry skipped up to her as lively as a cricket.

"Can you tell me," said he, "why an elephant with a glass globe of gold-fish tied to his tail is like the Lord High Admiral of the British Isles?"

"Was the globe of gold-fish all the elephant owned?" asked the goose-girl, thoughfully.

"Yes," said Huckleberry. "But I don't see what that 's got to do with it."

"Then the answer is," said Lois, without noticing this last remark, "because all his property is entailed."

"Well, I de-clare!" cried Huckleberry, opening his eyes as wide as they would go, "if you did n't guess it! Why, I did n't know it had an answer."

"I wish it had n't had an answer," said the goose-girl, suddenly stamping her foot. "I wish there had never been any

answer to it in the whole world. It was only yesterday that I promised Old Riddler that I would never guess another riddle, and here I 've done it! It 's too bad!"

"I don't think it is," cried Huckleberry, waving his little cap around by the tassel. "It 's all very well for father not to want people to guess his riddles, because they 've got answers and he knows what they are. But I would never have known that any of mine had an answer if you had n't guessed this one. If you had had a riddle like this one, would n't you have been glad to have some one tell you the answer?"

"Yes, I would," said Lois.

"Well, then, my good girl, remember this: If a thing gives you pleasure, it 's very likely that it will give somebody else pleasure. So let somebody else have a chance, and the next time you hear a riddle that you think the owner has no answer for, guess it for him, if you can." Good-by!"

And away went Master Huckleberry, skipping and singing and snapping his fingers and twirling his cap, until he came to a wide crack in the ground, when he rolled himself up like a huckleberry dumpling, and went tumbling and bouncing down into the underground home of the gnomes.

"Get out of the way!" said he to the gnomes he passed, as he proudly strode to his father's apartments. "I 'm going to make a report. For the first time in my life I 've taught somebody something."

When Huckleberry left her, the goose-girl stood silently in the midst of her geese. Her brow was overcast.

"How 's anybody to do two things that can't both be done?" she exclaimed at last. "I 'll have nothing more to do with riddles as long as I live."

THE GUDRA'S DAUGHTER.

THE Gudra's daughter was named Volma. She was thirteen years old, and had never been to school. Her kind mother had taught her all she knew.

But as there are many people who do not know what a Gudra is, I will state, at once, that a Gudra is a giant dwarf. Volma's father belonged to a nation of dwarfs, who dwelt among the mountains. These little people were seldom over three feet in height, but the Gudra—the giant among them—was between five and six feet high, and broad and stout in proportion. He was a powerful lord among his people, and his size and courage gave him additional importance and influence. He was very proud of his superior stature and his high position, and this pride was the reason why his daughter, Volma, had never been to school. He considered her far above such a thing as going to school with the dwarf children of the country,

Volma resembled her father, in stature, and, at the time of this story, was as large as an ordinary girl of her age. She was very good and gentle, and would have been glad to go to school, but this her haughty father would not allow. One day, Volma's mother—who was quite a small woman, even for a dwarf—began to talk about her daughter's want of education.

"Education!" cried the Gudra, "I intend she shall have an education. But I do not intend that she shall waste years in

poring over books and parchments. She is a girl with a fine mind, like mine. She can take in learning instantly. Even now. she is a head higher than any woman in the country."

"But does that make it any more easy for her to learn?" asked her mother.

"Of course it does!" exclaimed the Gudra. "She is superior, in every way, to any other child in the nation. She shall have an education, but she shall have it all at once. I am sure that her mind is capable of taking in an excellent education in a week."

This made the Gudra's wife exclaim, in astonishment, "My!"

"Of course it is!" cried the Gudra; and then, taking up a heavy hammer, he struck a large bell which hung in his room. This was his manner of summoning his attendants.

One stroke brought the attendant of the first rank, two strokes him of the second, and so on.

The one stroke brought in old Krignock, the head-councilor.

"Krignock!" said the Gudra, "you have known me for a very long time—ever since I was born. Did you ever know me to fail in anything?"

"Most noble sir," said Krignock, "I never did."

"There now," cried the Gudra, turning to his wife. "Did you hear that. I never have failed in anything, and I don't intend to do it now."

"But how do you expect to manage this matter?" asked his wife.

"I don't know yet," said the Gudra. "But I 'll do it."

The next day, the Gudra told his wife that he had decided to give his daughter her education among the ordinary men and women of the world; that their methods of learning must be better than those of the dwarfs, and that as Volma was now quite old enough to be a learned little princess, he should take her to

the part of the world where ordinary people live, and have her immediately educated.

"Am I to go?" asked his wife.

"No," said the Gudra. "I do not wish any one to suppose that she has so small a mother. I will take Krignock, half a dozen servants, and the Curious One. That will be enough. We shall soon be back."

THE GUDRA AND HIS DAUGHTER START ON THEIR JOURNEY.

"But will it not be dangerous," asked his wife, "to travel with the child and so few attendants?"

"Dangerous!" roared the Gudra, indignantly, "am *I* not going?"

The next day they started. They went on foot, for the dwarfs have no horses. The Gudra and his daughter marched

first, then came Krignock, then the attendants in single file, and at the rear of all walked the Curious One. This was a young fellow, not quite three feet high, and dressed entirely in white. He had a small head, which was absolutely bald. He was a full-grown dwarf, but had never had any hair on his head. To add to his peculiar appearance, he wore a glass cap. This allowed the sun to shine on his head, to keep it warm, and, in time of storms, it protected his pate from snow and rain. He was very proud of this cap, which was his own invention.

The duty of the Curious One was to find out things, and tell them to the Gudra. He was excellent at this business, being of an investigating turn of mind, and very fond of telling what he knew; and, on this account, the Gudra liked always to have him near at hand. He now walked last, so that he could see everything that the rest of the company might happen to do.

Having marched for the greater part of a day, with frequent rests, the Gudra and his party drew near a large city. As they approached it, they saw, walking toward them, an Ordinary Man.

"Ho, ho!" cried the Gudra, "here is one of them! And now, Krignock, tell me, am I not larger and taller than this person, who, I suppose, is about as big as any of them?"

"Exalted sir," replied Krignock, "it seems to me—it really does seem to me—that you are rather taller, and somewhat stouter than this person."

"I thought so, myself," said the Gudra, drawing himself up, "Indeed, I supposed, before I saw any of them, that I was larger than the men of this place."

The Ordinary Man now drew quite near, and was much amazed to see the company of dwarfs, who composed the train of the Gudra and his daughter. He stood still and looked at them.

A happy idea came into the Gudra's head. "We shall want some one to guide us about the great city," said he to his head-councilor. "Let us engage this person, if he is acquainted with the place."

The Ordinary Man, when Krignock proposed that he should become their guide, immediately consented. He was not rich, and was glad to get a job. He was also well acquainted with the city, having lived there all his life. The Gudra promised to pay him well.

"In the first place," said the Ordinary Man, when these arrangements had been made, "a party of your rank should not walk into the city. It would not be considered dignified. It would be well if you would sit here and rest, while I go and bring animals for your proper conveyance."

So the Gudra and his company sat down by the road-side, and the Ordinary Man returned to the city, where he went to one of his relatives, who kept a camel-stable, and hired a string of eleven camels. On these animals in single file, one person on each camel, the Gudra and the Ordinary Man leading, with the Curious One bringing up the rear, the party entered the town, As they slowly filed through the streets, a crowd of people collected and followed them. The Gudra was very proud when he saw the curiosity of the citizens.

"I thought I should attract attention," he said to himself.

It was generally supposed that this was a dwarf-show, in charge of the Gudra and the Ordinary Man; and the little people on the camels were regarded with great interest, especially the Curious One, who was very conspicuous as he sat on the tallest camel, with his glass cap glistening in the sun. The party was conducted to one of the best inns, where all were sumptuously lodged.

The next day, early in the morning, the Gudra summoned the guide, and told him his object in visiting the city.

"I suppose there are teachers of eminence in this place," said he.

"Oh yes, good sir!" replied the other. "There are persons here who can teach anything from alchemy to zoölogy. And there are also excellent schools.

"Which is the best school?" asked the Gudra.

"The *very* best?" said the other.

"Yes, certainly," replied the Gudra sharply; "of course I mean the very best."

"Well, then," said the Ordinary Man, "the very best school is the one where the young prince, the only son of the reigning Prince of the city, is educated. In it are all our most learned professors, and there is a class for every branch of education. But the young prince is the only pupil in the school. He is the only one in each class, and all the apartments, and apparatus, and books, and all the professors and tutors are for him alone."

"That is the very school I want," cried the Gudra. "It is just what I am looking for."

"But it would be impossible for you to get your daughter into that school," said the Ordinary Man. "It was established solely for the young prince, and his father will allow no one else to enter it. Some of our highest grandees have asked that their children might be permitted to share the instruction of the young prince, in this most admirable school, but they have always been denied the privilege."

"That makes no difference," said the Gudra. "*I* have never asked. I shall do so instantly. I shall write a letter to the Prince of the city, tell him who I am, and ask that my daughter be allowed to study in this school, where everything seems to be

brought together in such a manner that an education can be obtained, by a girl like Volma, in a very short time."

Without further ado, the Gudra wrote the letter, and the Ordinary Man was ordered to have it conveyed to the Prince.

That same day the answer came. The Prince positively refused to allow any child, with the exception of his son, to enter his school.

Now, indeed, was the Gudra angry. No one had ever seen him storm around the room as he now stormed. He vowed he would send to the king of his country, borrow an army, and carry his daughter into the Prince's school at the point of the sword.

"I am afraid," said the Ordinary Man, "that an army of dwarfs would have but a small chance against the soldiers of our Prince. And he has plenty of them."

The Gudra could not help thinking that there was sound sense in this remark, but that did not make him feel in any better humor. He called for his head-councilor.

"Krignock!" he cried, "did you ever know me to fail in anything?"

"Never, most eminent sir," replied Krignock; "I never did, indeed."

"Well, then," said the Gudra, striding up and down the floor, "I shall not fail now."

Poor Volma was greatly terrified and troubled at all this, and begged her father to take her home. She would be perfectly satisfied, she said, to learn from her mother and the ordinary teachers of dwarf-land. But her father would listen to nothing of the kind. He stalked up and down the floor, still vowing he would succeed in what he had resolved to do, although he did not seem to have any idea how to go about it.

Two or three days now passed, during which the Gudra fumed

and strode about; little Volma sat at the windows and gazed out at the strange sights of the great city, and the Curious One went everywhere, looking at everything, and coming back, in the evening, to tell his master what he had seen and heard. He heard a

"I SHALL NOT FAIL NOW," SAID THE GUDRA.

great deal—not very complimentary—about himself, and even that he told the Gudra.

During one of his walks he wandered into a suburb of the city. He wanted to see if anything in particular was going on there. Coming to a place where two roads began, one of which seemed about as interesting as the other, he was in great doubt as to which way he should go. He would not, upon any account, miss anything worth seeing by going the wrong way. While still unable to decide which road to take, he saw a person approaching

him who seemed to be a traveler. He was dusty and travel-worn.

"Sir!" cried the Curious One, "can you tell me where these roads lead?"

"I am sorry to say that I cannot," replied the other; "I am a stranger here; I never saw the city before."

"Indeed!" cried the Curious One; "where did you come from?"

"I came from the land of the giants," said the other.

"The giants!" exclaimed the Curious One. "Why, what were you doing there? Were you not afraid they would kill you?"

"Oh no!" replied the other, smiling; "they would not kill me. I am one of them."

"You!" cried the Curious One. "You! Why you are no bigger than an ordinary man."

"That is probably true," said the other, "I am a dwarf giant."

The Curious One opened his eyes, as wide as they would go. He was too much astonished to say a word.

"Yes," said the other, "my countrymen and my family are all giants. I am the only dwarf among them. I am so much smaller and weaker than any of them, that I can do none of the great things they do. And so, somewhat disheartened by my inferior position, I thought I would journey to this city, of which I have heard a great deal, in the hope that something would happen to raise my spirits."

"Do you know?" cried the Curious One, "this is the most wonderful thing! My master, who lately came to visit the city, is a giant dwarf! And he is just about your size!"

"That is rather remarkable," said the other. "A giant dwarf! I should like to see him."

"You can do that easily enough," said the Curious One. "Come with me, and I 'll take you to him. He has n't looked at many rare sights yet, and I know he will be glad to see you."

The Dwarf Giant smiled, and consented to go with the Curious One; not so much, however, to please the Gudra, as to see for himself what a giant dwarf looked like. On the way to the inn the Curious One (who had lost all interest in the two roads, now that he had found something so well worth seeing and showing) told the Dwarf Giant why his master had come to the city, and what had happened since his arrival.

"Perhaps you can help him."

"I doubt that very much," said the dwarf giant. "I am seldom successful in anything I undertake. But I am perfectly willing to try."

When they arrived at the inn, the Gudra appeared glad to see the Dwarf Giant, and immediately poured into his ears the story of his troubles and the affronts to which he had been subjected, to which the other listened as silently and patiently as if he had not heard it all before. When the long recital was finished, the Ordinary Man was summoned, and a consultation between the three was begun.

As little Volma sat and gazed at them, while they were talking together, she said to herself:

"They look just like three brothers."

The Gudra was in favor of carrying out his object by means of some kind of force. He proposed that he should challenge the Prince to single combat, and thus decide the matter. The others opposed this, the Dwarf Giant saying that, if he were in the Gudra's place, he would be afraid to undertake such a combat, for he had been told that the Prince was a brave soldier and a good fighter. The Ordinary Man, also, thought the plan was

a poor one. He proposed that they should all three go to the Prince, and lay the matter before him, in person. It was often much better to do things in this way than to write letters.

This proposition was agreed to, and the next day the three, accompanied by little Volma, proceeded to the Prince's palace. They were admitted, and the Prince gave them an audience. They found him on his throne, in a magnificent and spacious hall; and, as it happened to be a holiday, the little prince was sitting on a cushion by the side of his father's throne.

The Prince requested them to make known their business, and the Gudra, drawing himself up as tall as possible, began to state what he wanted, and how dissatisfied he was with the answer to his letter. During this speech, the little prince beckoned to Volma, and, moving to one side, made room for her on his cushion. So she sat down beside him, and they soon began to talk to each other, but in a very low tone.

"You, then," said the Prince, addressing the Gudra, when he had finished, "are a giant dwarf, and you," turning to his companions, "are a dwarf giant and an ordinary man?"

The three assented.

"Well," continued the Prince, with a smile, "I really do not see very much difference between you. I have heard the giant dwarf. Now, I would like to know what this dwarf giant and the ordinary man have to say."

The Dwarf Giant said that, of course, the prince had a good right to decide who should go to the school he had himself founded, and who should not go. But he thought it would be doing a very great favor to the Gudra, and especially to the Gudra's daughter,—who, in his eyes, was a very charming little girl,—if the Prince would allow her to study with his son. He put the matter entirely on this ground.

The Ordinary Man thought that, while the proposed arrangement would be of advantage to the little girl and the Gudra, it would also be of advantage to the Prince, who, when his son was grown up, would probably be very glad to know that there was, in a country not a day's march away, a young lady of noble birth, who was also admirably educated.

At this, the prince and the others turned and looked at Volma and the little prince, as they sat side by side. But the two children were now so busy talking that they did not notice this, nor had they heard a word that had been said.

"Well," said the Prince, "I will carefully consider what all of you have said, and will send an answer some time to-morrow." So saying, he dismissed his visitors, first drawing little Volma toward him and taking a good, long look at her pretty and good-humored countenance. In everything but stature, Volma resembled her mother.

After they had departed,—the Gudra a little discontented, for he had wanted his answer on the spot,—the Prince proceeded to consider the proposition that had been made to him. He would not have taken more than a minute to make his decision, had it not been that the dwarf giant was one of the party that asked the favor. He cared nothing for the Gudra and his dwarfs; but it would be a bad thing for him to be drawn into a quarrel with the giants, who would not take long to destroy his city, if they should happen to go to war with him. And, although this dwarf giant was very peaceful and reasonable in his remarks, there was no knowing that the quarrelsome Gudra would not be able to prevail upon him to enlist his countrymen in his cause.

So the Prince considered and considered, and the next morning he had not finished considering. He walked over to his son's

great school-house, that he might consult some of the professors in the matter. While standing in one of the large lecture-rooms, the Prince happened to spy a little creature, dressed in white and wearing a glass cap, who was creeping about among the benches and desks.

"Hello! What is that?" cried the Prince, and he ordered his attendants to seize the creature. The Curious One was very nimble, but he was soon surrounded and caught. When the Prince saw him, he laughed heartily, and asked him who he was and what he was doing there. The Curious One did not hesitate a moment, but told the Prince all about himself, and also informed him that he had visited the palace, and afterward the school, to try to hear something that would give him an idea of what the Prince's decision would be in regard to his master's proposition, so that he could run back and take the Gudra some early news. But, he was sorry to say, he had n't found out anything yet.

"Then your business," said the Prince, "is to see and hear all you can, and tell all you hear and see?"

"That is it, Estimable Prince," replied the Curious One.

"And to pry into other people's affairs?" continued the Prince.

I have to do that sometimes," returned the little fellow.

Well, you must not come prying here," said the Prince, and I shall punish you for doing so this time. I might send you to prison, but I will let you off with a slighter punishment than that."

He then called to him the Professor of Motto-Painting, and ordered him to paint a suitable motto on the top of the Curious One's bald head.

The Professor immediately took a little pot of black paint,

and, with a fine brush, he quickly painted a motto on the smooth, white pate of the Curious One. The glass cap was then replaced, and the motto, which was beautifully painted, was seen to show quite plainly through the top of the cap. All the professors

THE PROFESSOR OF MOTTO-PAINTING PAINTS A MOTTO ON THE CURIOUS ONE'S HEAD.

gathered around to see the motto, and they, as well as the Prince, laughed very heartily when they read it.

The Prince then called his son and told him to read the motto.

"You must understand," he said to him, "that this is not done to annoy, or to make fun of this little person. It is a punishment, and may do him more good than locking him up in a cell."

The moment the Curious One was releas- _, he ran into the

street, and asked the first person he met to please read the motto that was painted on his head, and tell him what it was. The man read it, and burst out laughing, but he would not tell him what the motto was. Many other people were asked, but some of them said there was nothing there, and others simply laughed and walked away.

Devoured by his desire to know what the motto was, the Curious One ran to the inn, feeling sure that his friends would relieve his anxiety; but they laughed, just as the others had done, and even little Volma told him there was nothing there. This he did not believe, for he had felt the paint on his skin, and so he went to his room and, holding a looking-glass over his head, tried to read the motto. There was something there,—that he could see plainly enough,—but the words appeared in the glass, not only to be written backward, but upside down, for the Professor had stood behind him when he painted them. So he had to give it up in despair, and for the rest of his stay in the city he wandered about, vainly trying to get some one to tell him what was written on his head. This was the only thing that he now wished to find out.

"Why don't you wash it off if it gives you so much trouble?" asked the Ordinary Man. "A little oil would quickly remove it."

"Wash it off!" cried the Curious One. "Then I should never know what it was! I would not wash it off for the world."

After the Prince had consulted with the professors, he concluded, solely because he was afraid of offending the giants, to agree to the Gudra's proposal.

"It will not matter so very much," he said, "as he only wishes his daughter to attend the school for one week, it seems."

The Ordinary Man was very much opposed to this plan of getting an education in a week. He thought it was too short

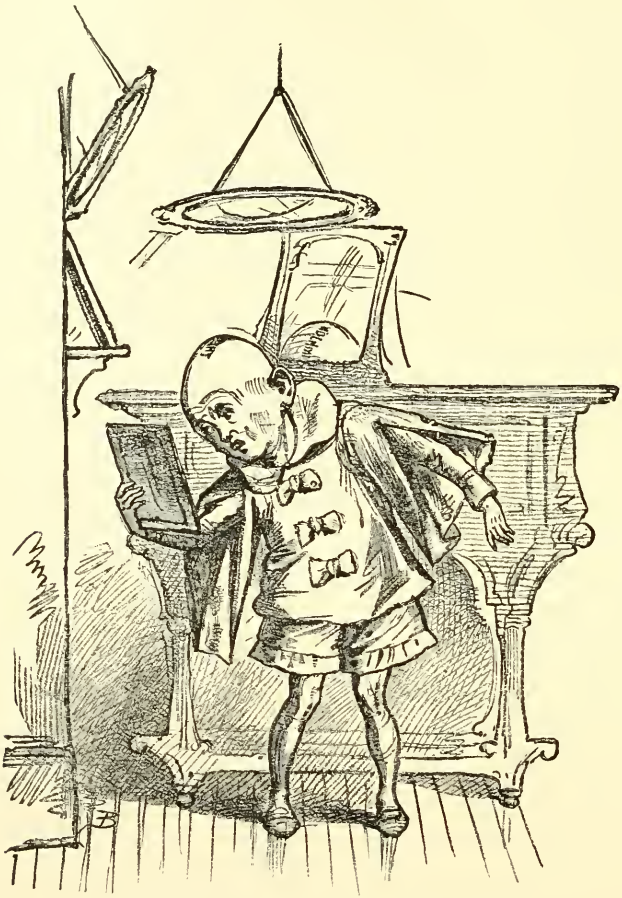
a time, not only for Volma, but for himself, for he wished his engagement to last as long as possible. But the Gudra would not listen to any objections. His daughter had an extraordinary mind, and a week was long enough for her. He took her to the school, and desired each Professor to tell her, in turn, all about the branch of learning he taught, and thus get through with the matter without loss of time. Then, each day, while his daughter was in school, he and his party, in company with the Dwarf Giant, and under the guidance of the Ordinary Man, visited all the sights and wonders of the city.

As for Volma, she did not study anything, as children generally study. She went from room to room, asking questions, listening to explanations, and paying the strictest attention to the manner in which the little prince studied and recited his lessons. The professors did not pretend to tell her, as the Gudra had desired, all about their different branches. They knew that would be folly. But they gave her all the information they could, and were astonished to find that she had already learned so much from her mother.

In exactly a week, the Gudra brought his visit to a close. He took leave of the Prince, giving him a diamond, handsomer than any among his treasures; he bade the Dwarf Giant good-by; and then, with his party mounted on the eleven camels, he rode away until he came to the mountains, where, paying the Ordinary Man twice as much as he had promised, he left him to return to the city with the animals, and proceeded, for the rest of the journey, on foot.

"There now!" he cried to his wife, when he had reached home. "Did not I tell you I never failed in anything? My daughter has been to the best school in the world, and her education is finished."

"My dear Volma," said her mother to her, when they were alone, "what *did* you learn in the great city?"



THE CURIOUS ONE READS HIS MOTTO.

"Oh, mother dear!" said Volma, "I learned ever so much. I learned, for one thing, that the largest dwarf is no bigger than

the smallest giant, and that neither of them is larger than an ordinary man. And, at the school, I learned that it takes years and years to study properly all that I should know. And I have found out how the little prince studies, and how he recites, and I have a list of the books and parchments and other things that I need for my education. And now, dear mother, we will get these things, and we will study them together here at home."

This they did, and gradually, little Volma became very well educated. Every year, the young prince came to see her, and, when she was about twenty years old, he married her, and took her away to the great city, of which he was now ruler. Volma's mother used to make her long visits, but her father seldom came to see her. He liked to stay where he was bigger than anybody else.

The Dwarf Giant went home in very good spirits. He had found out that a very small giant is as large as an ordinary man, and that satisfied him,

As for the Curious One, as soon as he reached home, he gathered together a lot of small looking-glasses, and so arranged them that, by having one reflect into another, and that into another, and so on, he at last saw the reflection of the top of his head, with the letters thereon, right side up, and in their proper order. and he read these words:

"There is nothing here?"

"Now, what does that mean?" he cried. "Did that Motto-Professor mean hair or brains?"

He never found out.

THE EMERGENCY MISTRESS.

JULES VATERMANN was a wood-cutter, and a very good one. He always had employment, for he understood his business so well, and was so industrious and trustworthy, that every one in the neighborhood where he lived, who wanted wood cut, was glad to get him to do it.

Jules had a very ordinary and commonplace life until he was a middle-aged man, and then something remarkable happened to him. It happened on the twenty-fifth of January, in a very cold winter. Jules was forty-five years old, that year, and he remembered the day of the month, because in the morning, before he started out to his work, he had remarked that it was just one month since Christmas.

The day before, Jules had cut down a tall tree, and he had been busy all the morning sawing it into logs of the proper length and splitting it up and making a pile of it.

When dinner-time came round, Jules sat down on one of the logs and opened his basket. He had plenty to eat,—good bread and sausage, and a bottle of beer, for he was none of your poor wood-cutters.

As he was cutting a sausage, he looked up and saw something coming from behind his wood-pile.

At first, he thought it was a dog, for it was about the right size for a small dog, but in a moment he saw it was a little man. He was a little man indeed, for he was not more than

two feet high. He was dressed in brown clothes and wore a peaked cap, and he must have been pretty old, for he had a full white beard. Although otherwise warmly clad, he wore on his feet neither shoes nor stockings, and came hopping along through the deep snow as if his feet were very cold.

JULES AND THE LITTLE MAN.

When he saw this little old man, Jules said never a word. He merely thought to himself: "This is some sort of a fairy man."

But the little old person came close to Jules, and drawing up one foot, as if it was so cold that he could stand on it no longer, he said:

"Please, sir, my feet are almost frozen."

"Oh, ho!" thought Jules, "I know all about that. This is one of the fairy-folks who come in distress to a person, and who if that person is kind to them, make him rich and happy; but if he turns them away, he soon finds himself in all sorts of misery. I shall be very careful." And then he said aloud: "Well, sir, what can I do for you?"

"That is a strange question," said the dwarf. "If you were to walk by the side of a deep stream, and were to see a man sinking in the water, would you stop and ask him what you could do for him?"

"Would you like my stockings?" said Jules, putting down his knife and sausage, and preparing to pull off one of his boots. "I will let you have them?"

"No, no!" said the other. "They are miles too big for me."

"Will you have my cap or my scarf in which to wrap your feet and warm them?"

"No, no!" said the dwarf. "I don't put my feet in caps and scarfs."

"Well, tell me what you would like," said Jules. "Shall I make a fire?"

"No, I will not tell you," said the fairy-man. "You have kept me standing here long enough."

Jules could not see what this had to do with it. He was getting very anxious. If he were only a quick-witted fellow, so as to think of exactly the right thing to do, he might make his fortune. But he could think of nothing more.

"I wish, sir, that you would tell me just what you would like for your cold feet," said Jules, in an entreating tone, "for I shall be very glad to give it to you, if it is at all possible."

"If your ax were half as dull as your brain," said the dwarf,

"you would not cut much wood. Good-day!"—and he skipped away behind the wood-pile.

Jules jumped up and looked after him, but he was gone. These fairy-people have a strange way of disappearing.

Jules was not married and had no home of his own. He lived with a good couple who had a little house and an only daughter, and that was about the sum of their possessions. The money Jules paid for his living helped them a little, and they managed to get along. But they were quite poor.

Jules was not poor. He had no one but himself to support, and he had laid by a sum of money to live on when he should be too old to work.

But you never saw a man so disappointed as he was that evening as he sat by the fire after supper.

He had told the family all about his meeting with the dwarf, and lamented again and again that he had lost such a capital chance of making his fortune.

"If I only could have thought what it was best to do!" he said, again and again.

"I know what I should have done," said Selma, the only daughter of the poor couple, a girl about eleven years old.

"What?" asked Jules, eagerly.

"I should have just snatched the little fellow up, and rubbed his feet and wrapped them in my shawl until they were warm," said she.

"But he would not have liked that," said Jules. "He was an old man and very particular."

"I would not care," said Selma; "I would n't let such a little fellow stand suffering in the snow, and I would n't care how old he was."

"I hope you 'll never meet any of these fairy people," said

Jules. "You 'd drive them out of the country with your roughness, and we might all whistle for our fortunes."

Selma laughed and said no more about it.

Every day after that, Jules looked for the dwarf-man, but he did not see him again. Selma looked for him, too, for her curiosity had been much excited; but as she was not allowed to go to the woods in the winter, of course she never saw him.

But, at last, summer came; and, one day, as she was walking by a little stream which ran through the woods, whom should she see, sitting on the bank, but the dwarf-man! She knew him in an instant, from Jules' descriptions. He was busily engaged in fishing, but he did not fish like any one else in the world. He had a short pole, which was floating in the water, and in his hand he held a string which was fastened to one end of the pole.

When Selma saw what the old fellow was doing, she burst out laughing. She knew this was not very polite, but she could not help it.

"What 's the matter?" said he, turning quickly toward her.

"I 'm sorry I laughed at you, sir," said Selma, "but that 's no way to fish."

"Much you know about it," said the dwarf. "This is the only way to fish. You let your pole float, with a piece of bait on a hook fastened to the big end of the pole. Then you fasten a line to the little end. When a fish bites, you haul in the pole by means of the string."

"Have you caught anything yet?" asked Selma.

"No, not yet," replied the dwarf.

"Well, I 'm sure I can fish better than that. Would you mind letting me try a little while?"

"Not at all—not at all!" said the dwarf, handing the line to

Selma. "If you think you can fish better than I can, do it by all means."

Selma took the line and pulled in the pole. Then she unfastened the hook and bait which was on the end of the pole, and tied it to the end of the line, with a little piece of stone for a sinker. She then took up the pole, threw in the line, and fished like common people. In less than a minute she had a bite, and, giving a jerk, she drew out a fat little fish as long as her hand.

"Hurrah!" cried the little old man, giving a skip in the air; and then, turning away from the stream, he shouted, "Come here!"

Selma turned around to see to whom he was calling, and she perceived another gnome, who was running toward them. When he came near, she saw that he was much younger than the fisher-gnome.

"Hello!" cried the old fellow, "I've caught one."

Selma was amazed to hear this. She looked at the old gnome, who was taking the fish off the hook, as if she were astonished that he could tell such a falsehood.

"What is this other person's name?" said she to him.

"His name," said the old gnome, looking up, "is Class 60, H."

"Is that all the name he has?" asked Selma, in surprise.

"Yes. And it is a very good name. It shows just who and what he is."

"Well, then, Mr. Class 60, H," said Selma, "that old—person did not catch the fish. I caught it myself."

"Very good! Very good!" said Class 60, H, laughing and clapping his hands. "Capital! See here!" said he, addressing the older dwarf, and he knelt down and whispered something in his ear.

"Certainly," said the old gnome. "That's just what I was

thinking of. Will you mention it to her? I must hurry and show this fish while it is fresh,"—and, so saying, he walked rapidly away with the little fish, and the pole and tackle.

"My dear Miss," said Class 60, H, approaching Selma, "would you like to visit the home of the gnomes,—to call, in fact, on the Queen Dowager of all the Gnomes?"

"Go down underground, where you live?" asked Selma. "Would it be safe down there, and when could I get back again?"

"Safe, dear miss! Oh, perfectly so! And the trip will not take you more than a couple of hours. I assure you that you will be back in plenty of time for supper. Will you go, if I send a trusty messenger for you? You may never have another chance to see our country."

Selma thought that this was very probable, and she began to consider the matter.

As soon as Class 60, H, saw that she was really trying to make up her mind whether or not to go, he cried out:

"Good! I see you have determined to go. Wait here five minutes and the messenger will be with you," and then he rushed off as fast as he could run.

"I did n't say I would go," thought Selma, "but I think I will."

In a very few minutes, Selma heard a deep voice behind her say: "Well, are you ready?"

Turning suddenly, she saw, standing close to her, a great black bear!

Frightened dreadfully, she turned to run, but the bear called out: "Stop! You need n't be frightened. I 'm tame."

The surprise of hearing a bear speak overcame poor Selma's terror; she stopped, and looked around.

"Come back," said the bear; "I will not hurt you in the least. I am sent to take you to the Queen Dowager of the Gnomes. I don't mind your being frightened at me. I'm used to it. But I am getting a little tired of telling folks that I am tame," and he yawned wearily.

"You are to take me?" said Selma, still a little frightened, and very certain that, if she had known a bear was to be sent for her, she never would have consented to go.

"Yes," said the bear. "You can get on my back and I will give you a nice ride. Come on! Don't keep me waiting, please."

There was nothing to be done but to obey, for Selma did not care to have a dispute with a bear, even if he were tame, and so she got upon his back, where she had a very comfortable seat, holding fast to his long hair.

The bear walked slowly but steadily into the very heart of the forest, among the great trees and the rocks. It was so lonely and solemn here that Selma felt afraid again.

"Suppose we were to meet with robbers," said she.

"Robbers!" said the bear, with a laugh. "That's good! Robbers, indeed! You need n't be afraid of robbers. If we were to meet any of them, you would be the last person they'd ever meet."

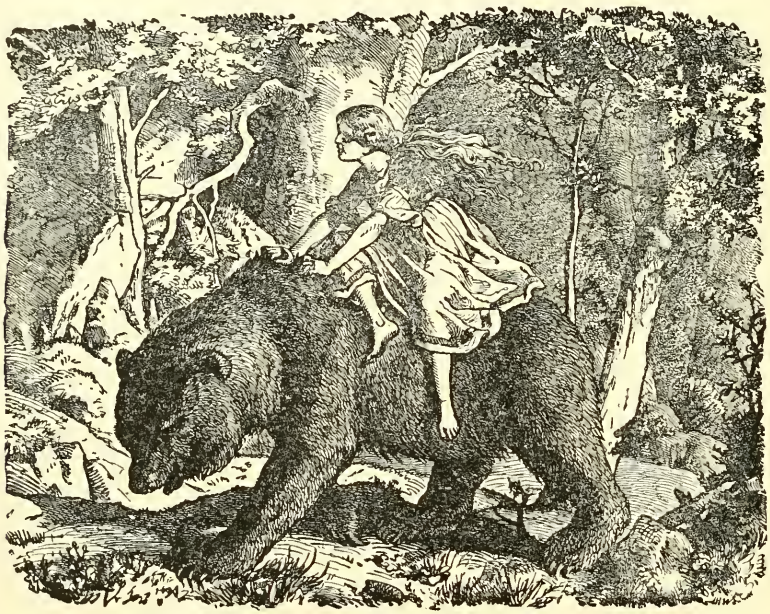
"Why?" asked Selma.

"I 'd tear 'em all into little bits," said the bear, in a tone which quite restored Selma's confidence, and made her feel very glad that she had a bear to depend upon in those lonely woods.

It was not very long before they came to an opening in a bank of earth, behind a great tree. Into this the bear walked, for it was wide enough, and so high that Selma did not even have to lower her head, as they passed in. They were now in a long winding passage, which continually seemed as if it was just coming to an end, but which turned and twisted, first one way and then

another, and always kept going down and down. Before long they began to meet gnomes, who very respectfully stepped aside to let them pass. They now went through several halls and courts, cut in the earth, and directly, the bear stopped before a door.

"You get off here," said the bear; and, when Selma had slid



"'ROBBERS!' SAID THE BEAR. 'THAT'S GOOD! ROBBERS, INDEED!'"

from his back, he rose up on his hind legs and gave a great knock with the iron knocker on the door. Then he went away.

In a moment, the door opened, and there stood a little old gnome woman, dressed in brown, and wearing a lace cap.

"Come in!" she said; and Selma entered the room. "The Queen Dowager will see you in a few minutes," said the little old

woman. "I am her housekeeper. I'll go and tell her you're here, and, meantime, it would be well for you to get your answers all ready, so as to lose no time."

Selma was about to ask what answers she meant, but the housekeeper was gone before she could say a word.

The room was a curious one. There were some little desks and stools in it, and in the center stood a great brown ball, some six or seven feet in diameter. While she was looking about at these things, a little door in the side of the ball opened, and out stepped Class 60, H.

"One thing I didn't tell you," said he, hurriedly. "I was afraid if I mentioned it you wouldn't come. The Queen Dowager wants a governess for her grandson, the Gnome Prince. Now, please don't say you can't do it, for I'm sure you'll suit exactly. The little fellow has had lots of teachers, but he wants one of a different kind now. This is the school-room. That ball is the globe where he studies his geography. It's only the under part of the countries that he has to know about, and so they are marked out on the inside of the globe. What they want now is a special teacher, and after having come here, and had the Queen Dowager notified, it wouldn't do to back out, you know."

"How old is the Prince?" asked Selma.

"About seventy-eight," said the gnome.

"Why, he's an old man," cried Selma.

"Not at all, my dear miss," said Class 60, H. "It takes a long time for us to get old. The Prince is only a small boy; if he were a human boy, he would be about five years old. I don't look old, do I?"

"No," said Selma.

"Well, I'm three hundred and fifty-two, next Monday. And as for Class 20, P,—the old fellow you saw fishing,—he is nine hundred and sixty."

"Well, you are all dreadfully old, and you have very funny names," said Selma.

"In this part of the world," said the other, "all gnomes, except those belonging to the nobility and the royal family, are divided into classes, and lettered. This is much better than having names, for you know it is very hard to get enough names to go around, so that every one can have his own. But here comes the housekeeper," and Class 60, H, retired very quickly into the hollow globe.

"Her Majesty will see you," said the housekeeper; and she conducted Selma into the next room, where on a little throne, with a high back and rockers, sat the Queen Dowager. She seemed rather smaller than the other gnomes, and was very much wrinkled and wore spectacles. She had white hair, with little curls on each side, and was dressed in brown silk.

She looked at Selma over her spectacles.

"This is the applicant?" said she.

"Yes, this is she," said the housekeeper.

"She looks young," remarked the Queen Dowager.

"Very true," said the housekeeper, "but she cannot be any older at present."

"You are right," said Her Majesty; "we will examine her."

So saying, she took up a paper which lay on the table, and which seemed to have a lot of items written on it.

"Get ready," said she to the housekeeper, who opened a large blank-book and made ready to record Selma's answers.

The Queen Dowager read from the paper the first question:

"What are your qualifications?"

Selma, standing there before this little old queen and this little old housekeeper, was somewhat embarrassed, and a question like this did not make her feel any more at her ease. She could not

think what qualifications she had. As she did not answer at once, the Queen Dowager turned to the housekeeper and said:

"Put down, 'Asked, but not given.'"

The housekeeper set that down, and then she jumped up and looked over the list of questions.

"We must be careful," said she, in a whisper, to the Queen Dowager, "what we ask her. It won't do to put all the questions to her. Suppose you try number twenty-eight?"

"All right," said Her Majesty; and, when the housekeeper had sat down again by her book, she addressed Selma and asked:

"Are you fond of children?"

Yes, ma'am," said Selma.

"Good!" cried the Queen Dowager, "that is an admirable answer."

And the housekeeper nodded and smiled at Selma, as if she was very much pleased.

"'Eighty-two' would be a good one to ask next," suggested the housekeeper.

Her Majesty looked for "Eighty-two," and read it out:

"Do you like pie?"

"Very much, ma'am," said Selma.

"Capital! capital!" said Her Majesty. "That will do. I see no need of asking her any other questions. Do you?" said she, turning to the housekeeper.

"None whatever," said the other. "She answered all but one, and that one she did n't really miss."

"There is no necessity for any further bother," said the Queen Dowager. "She is engaged."

And then she arose from the throne and left the room.

"Now, my dear girl," said the housekeeper. "I will induct you into your duties. They are simple."

"But I should like to know," said Selma, "if I'm to stay here all the time. I can't leave my father and mother ——"

"Oh! you won't have to do that," interrupted the housekeeper. "You will take the Prince home with you."

"Home with me?" exclaimed Selma.

"Yes. It would be impossible for you to teach him properly here. We want him taught Emergencies—that is, what to do in case of the various emergencies which may arise. Nothing of the kind ever arises down here. Everything goes on always in the usual way. But on the surface of the earth, where he will often go, when he grows up, they are very common, and you have been selected as a proper person to teach him what to do when any of them occur to him. By the way, what are your terms?"

"I don't know," said Selma. "Whatever you please."

"That will suit very well,—very well indeed," said the housekeeper. "I think you are just the person we want."

"Thank you," said Selma; and just then a door opened and the Queen Dowager put in her head.

"Is she inducted?" she asked.

"Yes," said the housekeeper.

"Then here is the Prince," said the Queen Dowager, entering the room and leading by the hand a young gnome about a foot high. He had on a ruffled jacket and trousers, and a little peaked cap. His royal grandmother led him to Selma.

"You will take him," she said, "for a session of ten months. At the end of that time we shall expect him to be thoroughly posted in emergencies. While he is away, he will drop all his royal titles and be known as Class 81, Q. His parents and I have taken leave of him. Good-bye!"

And she left the room, with her little handkerchief to her eyes.

"Now, then," said the housekeeper, "the sooner you are off, the better. The bear is waiting."

So saying, she hurried Selma and the Prince through the school-room, and, when they opened the door, there stood the bear, all ready. Selma mounted him, and the housekeeper handed up the Prince, first kissing him good-bye. Then off they started.

The Prince, or, as he must now be called, Class 81, Q, was a very quiet and somewhat bashful little fellow; and, although Selma talked a good deal to him, on the way, he did not say much. The bear carried them to the edge of the woods, and then Selma took the little fellow in her arms and ran home with him.

It may well be supposed that the appearance of their daughter with the young gnome in her arms greatly astonished the worthy cottagers, and they were still more astonished when they heard her story.

"You must do your best, my dear," said her mother, "and this may prove a very good thing for you, as well as for this little master here."

Selma promised to do as well as she could, and her father said he would try and think of some good emergencies, so that the little fellow could be well trained.

Everybody seemed to be highly satisfied, even Class 81, Q, himself, who sat cross-legged on a wooden chair, surveying everything about him; but when Jules Vatermann came home, he was very much dissatisfied, indeed.

"Confound it!" he said, when he heard the story. "I should have done all this. That should have been my pupil, and the good luck should have been mine. The gnome-man came first to me, and, if he had waited a minute, I should have thought of the right thing to do. I could teach that youngster far better than you, Selma. What do you know about emergencies?"

Selma and her parents said nothing. Jules had been quite cross-grained since the twenty-fifth of January, when he had met the gnome, and they had learned to pay but little attention to his fault-finding and complaining.

The little gnome soon became quite at home in the cottage, and grew very much attached to Selma. He was quiet, but sensible and bright, and knew a great deal more than most children of five. Selma did not have many opportunities to educate him in her peculiar branch. Very commonplace things generally happened in the cottage.

One day, however, the young gnome was playing with the cat, and began to pull her tail. The cat, not liking this, began to scratch Class 81, Q. At this, the little fellow cried and yelled, while the cat scratched all the more fiercely. But Selma, who ran into the room on hearing the noise, was equal to the emergency. She called out, instantly:

"Let go of his tail!"

The gnome let go, and the cat bounded away.

The lesson of this incident was then carefully impressed on her pupil's mind by Selma, who now thought that she had at last begun to do her duty by him.

A day or two after this, Selma was sent by her mother on an errand to the nearest village. As it would be dark before she returned, she did not take the little gnome with her. About sunset, when Jules Vatermann returned from his work, he found the youngster playing by himself in the kitchen.

Instantly, a wicked thought rushed into the mind of Jules. Snatching up the young gnome, he ran off with him as fast as he could go. As he ran, he thought to himself:

"Now is my chance. I know what to do, this time. I 'll just keep this young rascal and make his people pay me a pretty sum

for his ransom. I'll take him to the city, where the gnomes never go, and leave him there, in safe hands, while I come back and make terms. Good for you, at last, Jules!"

So, on he hurried, as fast as he could go. The road soon led him into a wood, and he had to go more slowly. Poor little Class 81, Q, cried and besought Jules to let him go, but the hard-hearted wood-cutter paid no attention to his distress.

Suddenly, Jules stopped. He heard something, and then he saw something. He began to tremble. A great bear was coming along the road, directly toward him!

What should he do? He could not meet that dreadful creature. He hesitated but a moment. The bear was now quite near, and, at the first growl it gave, Jules dropped the young gnome, and turned and ran away at the top of his speed. The bear started to run after him, not noticing little Class 81, Q, who was standing in the road; but as he passed the dwarf, who had never seen any bear except the tame one which belonged to the gnomes, and who thought this animal was his old friend, the little fellow seized him by the long hair on his legs and began to climb up on his back.

The bear, feeling some strange creature on him, stopped and looked around. The moment the young gnome saw the fiery eyes and the glittering teeth of the beast, he knew that he had made a mistake; this was no tame bear.

The savage beast growled, and, reaching back as far as he could, snapped at the little fellow on his back, who quickly got over on the other side. Then the bear reached back on that side, and Class 81, Q, was obliged to slip over again. The bear became very angry, and turned around and around in his efforts to get at the young gnome, who was nearly frightened to death. He could not think what in the world he should do. He could only remem-

ber that, in a great emergency,—but not quite as bad a one as this,—his teacher had come to his aid with the counsel, "Let go of his tail." He would gladly let go of the bear's tail, but the bear had none—at least, none that he could see. So what was he to do? "Let go of his tail!" cried the poor little fellow, to himself. "Oh, if he only had a tail!"

Before long, the bear himself began to be frightened. This was something entirely out of the common run of things. Never before in his life had he met with a little creature who stuck to him like that. He did not know what might happen next, and so he ran as hard as he could go toward his cave. Perhaps his wife, the old mother-bear, might be able to get this thing off. Away he dashed, and, turning sharply around a corner, little Class 81, Q, was jolted off, and was glad enough to find himself on the ground, with the bear running away through the woods.

The little fellow rubbed his knees and elbows, and, finding that he was not at all hurt, set off to find the cottage of his friend Selma, as well as he could. He had no idea which way to go, for the bear had turned around and around so often that he had become quite bewildered. However, he resolved to trudge along, hoping to meet some one who could tell him how to go back to Selma.

After a while, the moon rose, and then he could see a little better; but it was still quite dark in the woods, and he was beginning to be very tired, when he heard a noise as if some one was talking. He went toward the voice, and soon saw a man sitting on a rock by the road-side.

When he came nearer, he saw that the man was Jules, who was wailing and moaning and upbraiding himself.

"Ah me!" said the conscience-stricken wood-cutter, "Ah me! I am a wretch indeed. I have given myself up into the power

of the Evil One. Not only did I steal that child from his home, and from the good people who have always befriended me, but I have left him to be devoured by a wild beast of the forest. Whatever shall I do? Satan himself has got me in his power, through my own covetousness and greed. How—oh! how—can I ever get away from him?"

The little gnome had now approached quite close to Jules, and, running up to him, he said:

"Let go of his tail!"

If the advice was good for him in an emergency, it might be good for others.

Jules started to his feet and stood staring at the youngster he had thought devoured.

"Whoever would have supposed," said he, at last, "that a little heathen midget like that, born underground, like a mole, would ever come to me and tell me my Christian duty. And he's right, too. Satan would never have got hold of me if I had n't been holding to him all these months, hoping to get some good by it. I'll do it, my boy. I'll let go of his tail, now and forever." And, without thinking to ask Class 81, Q, how he got away from the bear, he took him up in his arms and ran home as fast as he could go.

During the rest of the young gnome's stay with Selma, he had several other good bits of advice in regard to emergencies, but none that was of such general application as this counsel to let go of a cat's tail, or the tail of anything else that was giving him trouble.

At the expiration of the session, the Queen Dowager was charmed with the improvement in her grandson. Having examined him in regard to his studies, she felt sure that he was now perfectly able to take care of himself in any emergency that might occur to him.

On the morning after he left, Selma, when she awoke, saw lying on the floor the little jacket and trousers of her late pupil. At first, she thought it was the little fellow himself; but when she jumped up and took hold of the clothes, she could not move them. They were filled with gold.

This was the pay for the tuition of Class 81, Q.

THE SPRIG OF HOLLY.

ONE Christmas, there was a great scarcity of holly in that part of the country where Colin and his little sister Dora lived. Everybody decorated their houses with Christmas greens, and as holly-branches and berries were particular favorites that year, Colin and Dora wished very much to get some to put up among the clusters of evergreens which their father had arranged over the big fire-place in their parlor at home. But not a leaf or sprig of holly could they find.

"I tell you, Dora," said Colin, "we are too late. All the people have been out here, and have picked every bit of holly they could see. We ought not to have waited so long. It is almost Christmas now, and of course the persons who wanted holly came and got it a good while ago. I know one thing: I'm not going to put off picking holly, next year. I'm coming out into the woods before anybody else."

"Yes, indeed," said little Dora.

They wanted so much to find some holly, that they did not give up the search, although they had been wandering about so long. They had found an evergreen bush with some berries on it; but it was not holly. All at once, Colin saw a fine twig of holly, with several great leaves and some berries as red as ripe cherries, waving gently about by the side of a great tree. It seemed as if it must be the only sprig on some little bush.

Without saying a word, Colin dashed forward toward the big

tree, followed closely by little Dora; but when they reached the holly, they found that it was not on a bush at all, but was held by a little dwarf, who had been waving it over his head to attract their attention.

"Hello!" cried the dwarf. "Don't you want a nice sprig of holly?"

Colin did not answer at first. He was too much astonished, and as for Dora, she just stood close to her brother, holding tight to his hand. The dwarf did not appear to be big enough to do them any harm, but he was such a strange creature that it is no wonder Colin hesitated before speaking to him. He wore a high cap, a funny little coat, and his breeches and shoes and stockings were all in one piece and fitted very tightly indeed.

"You do want some holly, don't you?" he said.

"Yes," said Colin, "I want some very much. We have been looking everywhere for it, but could n't find a bit."

"There is n't any more than this," said the dwarf. "This is the last sprig in the whole forest. And it's splendid, too. There's been no holly like it in this country for years and years and years. Look what big leaves it has, and see how bright and shiny they are, and what a fine bunch of berries is on it! It's very different from that piece of bush you have in your hand. That's not holly."

"I know it is n't," said Colin, "but I thought it might do, perhaps, if we did n't find any real holly."

"But it won't do," said the dwarf. "Nothing will do for holly but holly. That's been settled long ago. You can have this, if you'll pay me for it."

"How much do you want?" asked Colin.

"One year of your life," said the dwarf.

If Colin and Dora were astonished before, they were ever so much more astonished now.

"Why—what do you mean by that?" stammered Colin.

"I mean," said the dwarf, "that for one year you are to belong to me, and do everything I tell you to do."

"THIS IS THE LAST SPRIG IN THE WHOLE FOREST."

"I won't agree to that," said Colin, who had now recovered his spirits. "It's too much to ask."

"Yes, indeed," said little Dora, clinging closer to her brother.

"Well, then," said the dwarf, "what do you say to six months? I will let you have the sprig for six months of your life."

"No," answered Colin, "that's too much, too."

"How would a month suit you?" asked the dwarf. "That's not a long time."

"Indeed it *is* a long time," answered Colin. "I should think it was a dreadfully long time, if I had to do everything you told me to do, for a month."

"Yes, indeed," said little Dora.

"Well, then," said the dwarf, "suppose I say a week. Nothing could be more reasonable than that. I'll let you have this splendid sprig of holly,—the only one you can get anywhere,—if you will agree to belong to me for only one week."

"No," said Colin.

"A day, then," said the dwarf. "I'll let you have it if you 'll be mine for one day."

Colin did not answer. He stopped to think. What could the dwarf want with him for one day? He might tell him to do something very hard and very wrong. Perhaps he would make him commit a burglary. That could be done in less than a day.

While this conversation was going on, two little dwarfs, much smaller than the one with the holly-sprig, were crouching behind a mound of earth on which the larger dwarf was standing, and endeavoring, in all sorts of ways, to catch Dora's eye. They had a doll-baby, which they held up between them, trying to make her look at it. They seemed unwilling to show themselves boldly, probably because they were afraid of the larger dwarf; but they whispered, as loud as they dared:

"Oh, little girl, don't you want this doll? It's a splendid one, with wiggle-y legs and arms. You can have it for just one year

of your life. Or, if you will be ours for six months, you can take it. Look at it! You can have it for just one month of your life. Or a week—a short, little week!"

But neither Dora nor Colin saw or heard these earnest little creatures, and directly Colin looked up and said:

"No, I won't agree to it for a day."

"Well, then," said the dwarf, "I won't be hard on you. Will you agree to an hour?"

Colin thought that in an hour he might be made to do something he did n't like at all. Nobody could tell what these dwarfs could set a boy to doing. So he said:

"No, not an hour."

"A minute, then," said the dwarf.

Colin hesitated. That was not a long time, but he might be made to fire a gun or do something very dangerous in a minute.

"No, sir," said he.

"A second?" cried the dwarf.

"I might strike Dora in a second," thought Colin, and he sung out:

"No, I won't."

"Well, then, will you take it for nothing?" asked the dwarf.

"Oh, yes," said Colin. "I 'll take it for nothing."

"Here it is," said the dwarf, "and I am very glad, indeed, to give it to you."

"Well!" exclaimed Colin, in surprise. "You are a curious fellow! But I 'm very glad to get the holly. We 're ever so much obliged."

"Yes, indeed," said Dora, and she fairly jumped for joy.

The two little dwarfs were now nearly frantic in their endeavors to make Dora look at their doll. They still were afraid to call out, but they whispered as loud as they could:

"Oh, ho! little girl! Look here! You can have this doll for one short week of your life. For a day! For an hour! One minute! A second! Half a second! For one millionth part of a second! For the twenty-millionth part of a half second! Or for nothing at all! You can have it for nothing!"

But Dora heard not a word that they said, and never looked at them.

"Why are you so glad to give me the holly?" said Colin to the dwarf. "And if you wanted me to have it, why did n't you give it to me at first?"

"Oh, I could n't do that," said the little fellow. "We always have to try to get all the work we can out of the boys we offer that holly to, and I 'm glad you did n't make a bargain, because, if you had, I do n't know what in the world I should have set you to doing. I offered it to a boy last year, and he agreed to do what I told him for six months. He would n't engage for longer than that, for his summer holidays would begin at the end of that time. And I know he thought he 'd rather work for me than go to school. Well, I had a dreadful time with that boy. After the first week or two, I could n't think of a thing for him to do. He had done everything that I wanted. I would tell him to go and play, and he would come back in an hour or two, and say, 'I 've done playing; what shall I do next?' And then I 'd have to shake my fist at him, and look as cross as I could, and tell him that if he did n't go play and stay playing, I would do something dreadful to him. But of course that sort of thing would n't do very long, and so I had to find work for him until his time was up. It nearly wore me out. I think that if he had agreed for a year, it would have driven me crazy."

"But how did you come to have the holly sprig, if this boy earned it?" asked Colin.

"Oh, the first thing I told him to do, after his bargain was made, was to give me back that holly. We have to do that, or else we could n't keep on hiring boys."

"I call that cheating," said Colin.

"Yes, indeed," said little Dora.

"I suppose it is," said the dwarf, "if you look at it in a certain light. But we won't talk about that now. You have the holly-sprig, and I have no right to ask you to give it back to me. You can take it home, and I shall never see it again. Hurrah! Good-bye!"

And he made one jump backward, behind the big tree, and was gone.

Colin and Dora now hurried home, very happy, indeed, for no such sprig of holly had they ever seen as this which the dwarf had given them. It would look splendidly over the fire-place!

The two little dwarfs ran after them as fast as they could.

"Where had we got to?" said one to the other, just as they caught up to Colin and Dora.

"We were at 'nothing,'" said the other.

"All right, then, we won't go back on the bargain."

Then they both ran in front of the children, and holding up the doll between them, they called out:

"Little girl! will you have this doll for nothing?"

Colin and Dora stopped short. This was truly a most astonishing sight.

"Look at its legs and arms," said the larger dwarf. "See how they wiggle! You can make it sit down. Will you take it for nothing?"

Dora did not hesitate.

"Yes, indeed," said she.

Thrusting the doll into her hands, the two little dwarfs gave a

wild shout, and rushed away, with the long tails which they had to their bonnets waving in the wind as they ran.

The children then hurried home as fast as they could, and when they had told their story and shown their gifts, great was the surprise and delight of everybody; for no one had ever seen such a large-leaved and bright-berried sprig of holly as the one the dwarf gave Colin, or so fine a doll, with such remarkably wiggle-y arms and legs, as the one the little dwarfs gave Dora.

"The thing that pleases me most about it all," said their father, "is Colin's steady refusal to make a rash bargain, even for a very short time. Colin, my boy, I think you are to be trusted."

"Yes, indeed," said little Dora, hugging her doll, and looking proudly into her brother's face.

THE MAGICIAN'S DAUGHTER

AND THE

HIGH-BORN BOY.

THERE was once a great castle which belonged to a magician. It stood upon a high hill, with a wide court-yard in front of it, and the fame of its owner spread over the whole land. He was a very wise and skillful magician, as well as a kind and honest man, and people of all degrees came to him, to help him out of their troubles.

But he gradually grew very old, and at last he died. His only descendant was a daughter, thirteen years of age, named Filamina, and everybody wondered what would happen, now that the great magician was dead.

But one day, Filamina came out on the broad front steps of the castle, and made a little speech to all the giants, and afrits, and fairies, and genii, and dwarfs, and gnomes, and elves, and pigmies, and other creatures of that kind, who had always been in the service of the old magician, to do his bidding when some wonderful thing was to be accomplished.

"Now that my poor father is dead," said she, "I think it is my duty to carry on the business. So you will all do what I tell

you to do, just as you used to obey my father. If any persons come who want anything done, I will attend to them."

The giants and fairies, and all the others, were very glad to hear Filamina say this, for they all liked her, and they were tired of being idle.

Then an afrit arose from the sunny stone on which he had been lying, and said that there were six people outside of the gate

THE SIX APPLICANTS WHO WISHED TO BE HELPED OUT OF TROUBLE.

who had come to see if there was a successor to the magician, who could help them out of their trouble.

"You can bring them into the Dim-lit Vault," said Filamina, "but, first, I will go in and get ready for them."

The Dim-lit Vault was a vast apartment, with a vaulted ceiling, where the old magician used to see the people who came to him. All around the walls or shelves, and on stands and tables, in various parts of the room, were the strange and wonderful instruments of magic that he used.

There was a great table in the room, covered with parchments and old volumes of magic lore. At one end of the table was the magician's chair, and in this Filamina seated herself, first piling several cushions on the seat, to make herself high enough.

"Now, then," said she, to the afrit in attendance, "everything seems ready, but you must light something to make a mystic smell. That iron lamp at the other end of the room will do. Do you know what to pour into it?"

The afrit did not know, but he thought he could find something, so he examined the bottles on the shelves, and taking down one of them, he poured some of its contents into the lamp and lighted it. In an instant there was an explosion, and a piece of the heavy lamp just grazed the afrit's head.

"Don't try that again," said Filamina. "You will be hurt. Let a ghost come in. He can't be injured."

So a ghost came in, and he got another iron lamp, and tried the stuff from another bottle. This blew up, the same as the other, and several pieces of the lamp went right through the ghost's body, but of course it made no difference to him. He tried again, and this time he found something which smelt extremely mystical.

"Now call them in," said Filamina, and the six persons who were in trouble entered the room. Filamina took a piece of paper and a pencil, and asked them, in turn, what they wished her to do for them. The first was a merchant, in great grief because he had lost a lot of rubies, and he wanted to know where to find them.

"How many of them were there?" asked Filamina of the unlucky merchant.

"Two quarts," said the merchant. "I measured them a few days ago. Each one of them was as large as a cherry."

'A big cherry?" asked Filamina.

'Yes," said the merchant. "The biggest kind of a cherry."

"Well," said Filamina, putting all this down on her paper, "you can come again in a week, and I will see what I can do for you."

The next was a beautiful damsel who had lost her lover.

"What kind of a person is he?" asked Filamina.

"Oh," said the beautiful damsel, "he is handsomer than tongue can tell. Tall, magnificent, and splendid in every way. He is more graceful than a deer, and stronger than a lion. His hair is like flowing silk, and his eyes like the noon-day sky."

"Well, don't cry any more," said Filamina. "I think we shall soon find him. There can't be many of that kind. Come again in a week, if you please."

The next person was a covetous king, who was very anxious to possess the kingdom next to his own.

"The only difficulty is this," he said, his greedy eyes twinkling as he spoke, "there is an old king on the throne, and there is a very young heir—a mere baby. If they were both dead, I would be the next of kin, and would have the kingdom. I don't want to have them killed instantly. I want something that will make them sicker, and sicker, and sicker, till they die."

"Then you would like something suitable for a very old man, and something for a very young child?" said Filamina.

"That is exactly it," replied the covetous king.

"Very well," said Filamina; "come again in a week, and I will see what I can do for you."

The covetous king did not want to wait so long, but there was no help for it, and he went away.

Next came forward a young man, who wanted to find out how to make gold out of old iron bars and horseshoes. He had tried

many different plans, but could not succeed. After him came a general, who could never defeat the great armies which belonged to the neighboring nations. He wished to get something which would insure victory to his army. Each of these was told to come again in a week, when his case would be attended to.

The last person was an old woman, who wanted to know a good way to make root-beer. She had sold root-beer for a long time, but it was not very good, and it made people feel badly, so that her custom was falling off. It was really necessary, she said, for her to have a good business, in order that she might support her sons and daughters, and send her grandchildren to school.

"Poor woman!" said Filamina. "I will do my best for you. Do you live far away?"

"Oh, yes," said the old woman, "a weary way."

"Well, then, I will have you taken home, and I will send for you in a week."

Thereupon, calling two tall giants, she told them to carry the old woman home in a sedan-chair, which they bore between them.

When the visitors had all gone, Filamina called in her servants and read to them the list she had made.

"As for this merchant," she said, "some of you gnomes ought to find his rubies. You are used to precious stones. Take a big cherry with you, and try to find two quarts of rubies of that size. A dozen fairies can go and look for the handsome lover of the beautiful damsel. You 'll be sure to know him if you see him. A genie can examine the general's army and see what 's the matter with it. Four or five dwarfs, used to working with metals, can take some horseshoes and try to make gold ones of them. Do any of you know of a good disease for an old person, and a good disease for a baby?"

An elf suggested rheumatism for the old person, and Filamina herself thought of colic for the baby.

"Go and mix me," she said to an afrit, "some rheumatism and some colic in a bottle. I am going to make that greedy king take it himself. As for the root-beer," she continued, "those of you who think you can do it, can take any of the stuff you find on the shelves here, and try to make good root-beer out of it. To-morrow, we will see if any of you have made beer that is really good. I will give a handsome reward to the one who first finds out how it ought to be made."

Thereupon, Filamina went up to her own room to take a nap, while quite a number of fairies, giants, dwarfs and others set to work to try and make good root-beer. They made experiments with nearly all the decoctions and chemicals they found on the shelves, or stored away in corners, and they boiled, and soaked, and mixed, and stirred, until far into the night.

It was a moonlight night, and one of the gnomes went from the Dim-lit Vault, where his companions were working away, into the court-yard, and there he met the ghost, who was gliding around by himself.

"I 'll tell you what it is," said the gnome, "I do n't want to be here to-morrow morning, when that stuff is to be tasted. They 're making a lot of dreadful messes in there. I 'm going to run away, till it 's all over."

"It does n't make any difference to me," said the ghost, "for I would n't be asked to drink anything; but, if you 're going to run away, I do n't mind going with you. I have n't got anything to do." So off the two started together, out of the great gate.

"Hold up!" soon cried the gnome, who was running as fast as his little legs would carry him. "Can't you glide slower? I can't keep up with you?"

"You ought to learn to glide," said the ghost, languidly. "It 's ever so much easier than walking."

"When I 'm all turned into faded smoke," said the gnome, a li tle crossly, "I 'll try it; but I can't possibly do it now."

So the ghost glided more slowly, and the two soon came to the cottage of a wizard and a witch, who lived near the foot of the hill, where they sometimes got odd jobs from the people, who were going up to the magician's castle. As the wizard and his wife were still up, the gnome and his companion went in to see them and have a chat.

"How are you getting on?" said the ghost, as they all sat around the fire. "Have you done much incanting lately?"

"Not much," said the wizard. "We thought we would get a good deal of business when the old man died; but the folks seem to go up to the castle the same as ever."

"Yes," said the gnome, "and there's rare work going on up there now. They're trying to make root-beer for an old woman, and you never saw such a lot of poisonous trash as they have stewed up."

"They can't make root-beer!" sharply cried the witch. "They don't know anything about it. There is only one person who has that secret, and that one is myself."

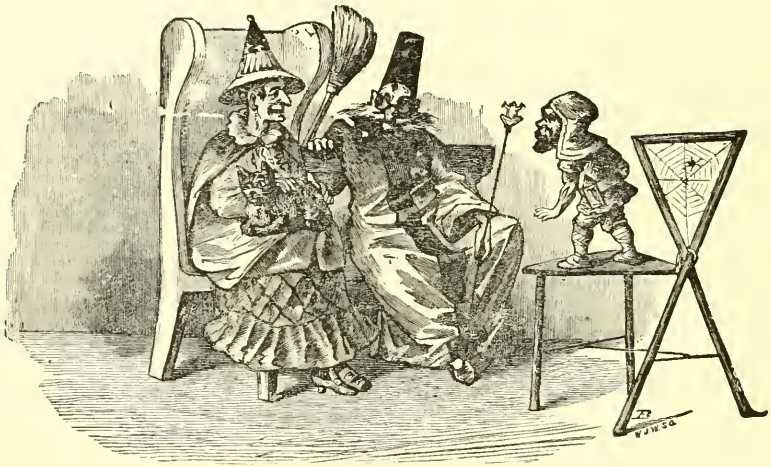
"Oh, tell it to me!" exclaimed the gnome, jumping from his chair. "There's to be a reward for the person who can do it right, and ——"

"Reward!" cried the witch. "Then I'm likely to tell it to you, indeed! When you're all done trying, I'm going to get that reward myself."

"Then I suppose we might as well bid you good-night," said the gnome, and he and the ghost took their departure.

"I'll tell you what it is," said the latter, wisely shaking his head, "those people will never prosper; they're too stingy."

"True," said the gnome, and just at that moment they met a pigwidgeon, who had been sent from the castle a day or two before on a long errand. He, of course, wanted to know where the gnome and the ghost were going; but when he heard their story, he said nothing, but kept on his way.



"OH, TELL IT TO ME!" EXCLAIMED THE GNOME.

When he reached the castle, he found that all the beer had been made, and that the busy workers had just brought out the various pots and jars into the court-yard to cool. The pigwidgeon took a sniff or two at the strange stuff in some of the jars, and then he told about the gnome and the ghost running away. When he mentioned the reason of their sudden departure, the whole assemblage stood and looked at each other in dismay.

"I never thought of that," said a tall giant; "but it's just what will happen. We shall have to taste those mixtures, and I should n't wonder a bit if half of them turned out to be poison. I'm going!"

And so saying, he clapped on his hat, and made one step right over the court-yard wall. In an instant, every giant, genie, dwarf, fairy, gnome, afrit, elf, and the rest of them, followed him out of the gate or over the wall, and swarming down the hill, they disappeared toward all quarters of the compass.

All but one young hobgoblin. He had a faithful heart, and he would not desert his mistress. He stayed behind, and in the morning, when she came down, he told her what had happened.

"And they have all deserted me," she said, sadly, "but you."

The hobgoblin bowed his head. His head was a great deal too large, and his legs and arms were dangly, but he had an honest face.

"Perhaps they were wise," she said, looking into the pots and jars. "It might have killed them. But they were cowards to run away, instead of telling me about it; and I shall make you Ruler of the Household, because you are the only faithful one."

The hobgoblin was overwhelmed with gratitude, and could scarcely say a word.

"But I can never get along without any of them," said Filamina. "We must go and look for them; some may not be far away. We will lock the gate and take the key. May I call you Hob?"

The hobgoblin said she certainly might, if she'd like it.

"Well, then, Hob," said she, "you must go and get a chair, for we can't reach the big lock from the ground."

So Hob ran and got a chair, and brought it outside. They pulled the gate shut, and, standing on the chair, and both using all their force, they turned the big key, which the hobgoblin then took out, and carried, as they both walked away.

"You ought to be careful of the key," said Filamina, "for, if you lose it, we shall not be able to get back. Have n't you a pocket?"

"Not one big enough," said the hobgoblin: "but you might slip it down my back. It would be safe there."

So Filamina took the key and slipped it down his back. It was so big that it reached along the whole of his spine, and it was very cold; but he said never a word.

They soon came to the cottage of the wizard, and there they stopped, to ask if anything had been seen of the runaways. The witch and the wizard received them very politely, and said that they had seen a gnome and a ghost, but no others. Then Filamina told how her whole household, with the exception of the faithful hobgoblin, had gone off and deserted her; and, when she had finished her story, the witch had become very much excited. Drawing her husband to one side, she said to him:

"Engage our visitors in conversation for a time. I will be back directly."

So saying, she went into a little back-room, jumped out of the window, and ran as fast as she could to the castle.

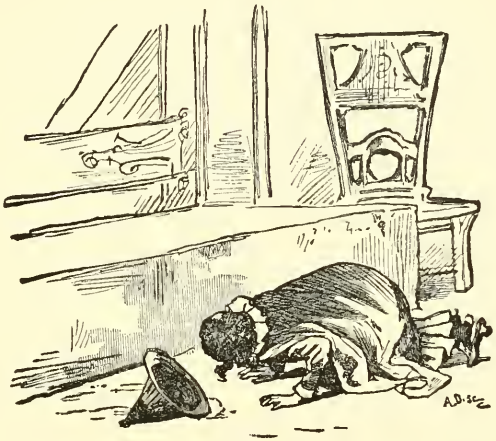
"Just to think of it!" she said to herself, as she hurried along. "That whole castle empty! Not a creature in it! Such a chance will never happen again! I can rummage among all the wonderful treasures of the old magician. I shall learn more than I ever knew in my life!"

In the meantime, the wizard, who was a very kindly person, talked to Filamina and the hobgoblin about the wonders of Nature, and told them of his travels in various parts of the earth, all of which interested Filamina very much; and, as the hobgoblin was ever faithful to his mistress, he became just as much interested as he could be

When the witch reached the castle, she was surprised to find the great gate locked. She had never thought of that. "I didn't see either of them have the key," she said to herself, "and it is

too big to put in anybody's pocket. Perhaps they 've hidden it under the step.

So she got down on her knees, and groped about under the great stone before the gate. But she found no key. Then she saw the chair which had been left by the gate.



THE WITCH SEARCHES FOR THE KEY.

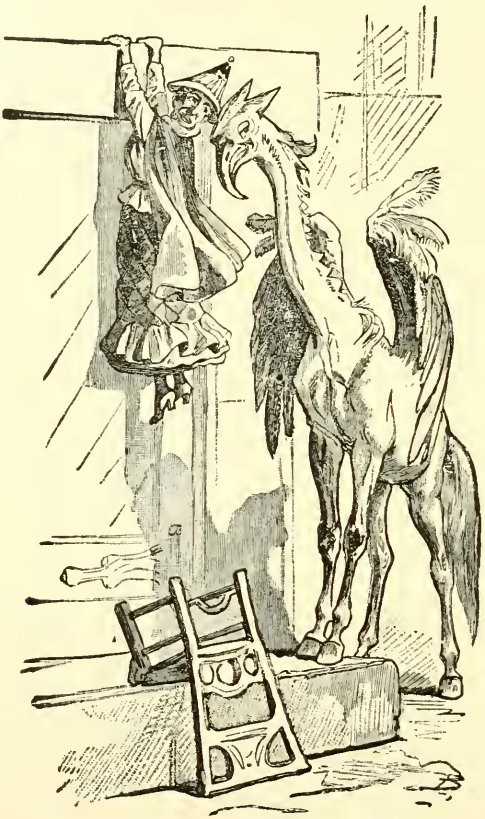
"Oho!" she cried. "That's it! They put the key on the ledge over the gate, and had the chair to stand on!"

She then quickly set the chair before the gate and stood up on it. But she could not yet reach the ledge, so she got up on the back. She could now barely put her hands over the ledge, and while she was feeling for the key, the chair toppled and fell over, leaving her hanging by her hands. She was afraid to drop, for she thought she would hurt herself, and so she hung, kicking and calling for help.

Just then, there came up a hippogriff, who had become peni-

tent, and determined to return to his duty. He was amazed to see the witch hanging in front of the gate, and ran up to her.

"Aha!" he cried. "Trying to climb into our castle, are you? You 're a pretty one!"



THE HIPPOGRIFF GAINS THE SECRET.

"Oh, Mr. Hippogriff," said the witch, "I can explain it all to you, if I can only get down. Please put that chair under me. I'll do anything for you, if you will."

The hippogriff reflected. What could she do for him? Then he thought that perhaps she knew how to make good root-beer. So he said he would help her down if she would tell him how to make root-beer.

"Never!" she cried. "I am going to get the reward for that myself. Anything but that!"

"Nothing but that will suit me," said the hippogriff, "and if you don't choose to tell me, I'll leave you hanging there until the giants and the afrits come back, and then you will see what you will get."

This frightened the witch very much, and in a few moments she told the hippogriff that, if he would stretch up his long neck, she would whisper the secret in his ear. So he stretched up his neck, and she told him the secret.

As soon as he had heard it, he put the chair under her, and she got down, and ran home as fast as she could go.

She reached the cottage none too soon, for the wizard was finding it very hard to keep on engaging his visitors in conversation.

Filamina now rose to go, but the witch asked her to stay a little longer.

"I suppose you know all about your good father's business," said she, "now that you are carrying it on alone?"

"No," said Filamina, "I don't understand it very well; but I try to do the best that I can."

"What you ought to do," said the witch, "is to try to find one or two persons who understand the profession of magic, and have been, perhaps, carrying it on, in a small way, themselves. Then they could do all the necessary magical work, and you would be relieved of the trouble and worry."

"That would be very nice," said Filamina, "if I could find such persons."

Just then a splendid idea came into the head of the hobgoblin. Leaning toward his mistress, he whispered, "How would these two do?"

"Good!" said Filamina, and turning to the worthy couple, she said, "Would you be willing to take the situation, and come to the castle to live?"

The witch and the wizard both said that they would be perfectly willing to do so. They would shut up their cottage, and come with her immediately, if that would please her. Filamina thought that would suit exactly, and so the cottage was shut up, and the four walked up to the castle, the witch assuring Filamina that she and her husband would find out where the runaways were, as soon as they could get to work with the magical instruments.

When they reached the gate, and Filamina pulled the key from the hobgoblin's back, the witch opened her eyes very wide.

"If I had known that," she said to herself, "I need not have lost the reward."

All now entered the castle, and the penitent hippogriff, who had been lying in a shadow of the wall, quietly followed them.

The wizard and the witch went immediately into the Dim-lit Vault, and began with great delight to examine the magical instruments. In a short time the wizard came hurrying to call Filamina.

"Here," he said, when he had brought her into the room, "is a myth-summoner. With this, you can bring back all your servants. You see these rows of keys, of so many colors. Some are for fairies, some for giants, some for genii, and there are some for each kind of creature. Strike them, and you will see what will happen."

Filamina immediately sat down before the key-board of this strange machine, and ran her fingers along the rows of keys. In

a moment, from all directions, through the air, and over the earth, came giants, fairies, afrits, genii, dwarfs, gnomes, and all the rest of them. They did not wish to come, but there was nothing for them but instant obedience when the magic keys were struck which summoned them.

They collected in the court-yard, and Filamina stood in the door-way and surveyed them.

"Don't you all feel ashamed of yourselves?" she said.

No one answered, but all hung their heads. Some of the giants, great awkward fellows, blushed a little, and even the ghost seemed ill at ease.

"You need n't be afraid of the beer now," she said, "I am going to have it all thrown away; and you need n't have been afraid of it before. If any of you had been taken sick, we would have stopped the tasting. As you all deserted me, except this good hobgoblin, I make him Ruler of the Household and you are to obey him. Do you understand that?"

All bowed their heads, and she left them to their own reflections.

"The next time they run away," said the faithful Hob, "you can bring them back before they go."

In a day or two, the messengers which Filamina had sent out to look for the lost rubies, and the lost lover, to inquire into the reason why the general lost his battles, and to try and find out how horseshoes could be changed into gold, returned and made their reports. They had not been recalled by the myth-summoner, because their special business, in some magical manner, disconnected them from the machine.

The gnomes who had been sent to look for the rubies, reported that they had searched everywhere, but could not find two quarts of rubies, the size of cherries. They thought the merchant

must have made a mistake, and that he should have said currants. The dwarfs, who had endeavored to make gold out of horseshoes, simply stated that they could not do it; they had tried every possible method. The genie who had gone to find out why the general always lost his battles reported that his army was so much smaller and weaker than those of the neighboring countries that it was impossible for him to make a good fight; and the fairies who had searched for the lost lover said that there were very few persons, indeed, who answered to the description given by the beautiful damsel, and these were all married and settled.

Filamina, with the witch and the wizard, carefully considered these reports, and determined upon the answers to be given to the applicants when they returned.

The next day, there rode into the court-yard of the castle a high-born boy. He was somewhat startled by the strange creatures he saw around him, but he was a brave fellow, and kept steadily on until he reached the castle door, where he dismounted and entered. He was very much disappointed when he heard that the great magician was dead, for he came to consult him on an important matter.

When he saw Filamina, he told her his story. He was the son of a prince, but his father and mother had been dead for some time. Many of the people of the principality to which he was heir urged him to take his seat upon the throne, because they had been so long without a regular ruler; while another large party thought it would be much wiser for him to continue his education until he was grown up, when he would be well prepared to enter upon the duties of his high position. He had been talked to a great deal by the leaders of each of these parties, and, not being able to make up his mind as to what he should do, he had come here for advice.

THE TWO GIANTS BRING IN THE SEDAN-CHAIR. (*See page 133.*)

"Is the country pretty well ruled now?" asked Filamina, after considering the matter a moment.

"Oh, yes," answered the high-born boy; "there are persons, appointed by my father, who govern everything all right. It's only the name of the thing that makes some of the people discontented. All the principalities in our neighborhood have regular princes, and they want one, too."

"I'll tell you what I would do," said Filamina. "I would just keep on going to school, and being taught things, until I was grown up, and knew everything that a prince ought to know. Then you could just manage your principality in your own way. Look at me! Here am I with a great castle, and a whole lot of strange creatures for servants, and people coming to know things, and I can do hardly anything myself, and have to get a wizard and a witch to come and manage my business for me. I'm sure I would n't get into the same kind of a fix if I were you."

"I do n't believe," said the high-born boy, "that I could have had any better advice than that from the very oldest magician in the world. I will do just what you have said."

Filamina now took her young visitor around the castle to show him the curious things, and when he heard of the people who were coming the next day, to know what had been done for them, he agreed to stay and see how matters would turn out. Filamina's accounts had made him very much interested in the various cases.

At the appointed time, all the persons who had applied for magical assistance and information assembled in the Dim-lit Vault. Filamina sat at the end of the table, the high-born boy had a seat at her right, while the witch and the wizard were at her left. The applicants stood at the other end of the table, while the giants, afrits, and the rest of the strange household grouped themselves around the room.

"Some of these cases," said Filamina, "I have settled myself, and the others I have handed over to these wise persons, who are a wizard and a witch. They can attend to their patients first."

The high-born boy thought that she ought to have said "clients," or "patrons," but he was too polite to speak of it.

The wizard now addressed the merchant who had lost the rubies.

"How do you know that you lost two quarts of rubies?" said he.

"I know it," replied the merchant, "because I measured them in two quart pots."

"Did you ever use those pots for anything else?" asked the wizard.

"Yes," said the merchant; "I afterward measured six quarts of sapphires with them."

"Where did you put your sapphires when you had measured them?"

"I poured them into a peck jar," said the merchant.

"Did they fill it?" asked the wizard.

"Yes; I remember thinking that I might as well tie a cloth over the top of the jar, for it would hold no more."

"Well, then," said the wizard, "as six quarts of sapphires will not fill a peck jar, I think you will find your rubies at the bottom of the jar, where you probably poured them when you wished to use the quart pots for the sapphires."

"I should n't wonder," said the merchant. "I'll go right home and see."

He went home, and sure enough, under the six quarts of sapphires, he found his rubies.

"As for you," said the wizard to the general who always lost his battles, "your case is very simple: your army is too weak

What you want is about twelve giants, and this good young lady says she is willing to furnish them. Twelve giants, well armed with iron clubs, tremendous swords and long spears, with which they could reach over moats and walls, and poke the enemy, would make your army almost irresistible."

"Oh, yes," said the general, looking very much troubled, "that is all true; but think how much it would cost to keep a dozen enormous giants! They would eat more than all the rest of the army. My king is poor; he is not able to support twelve giants."

"In that case," said the wizard, "war is a luxury which he cannot afford. If he cannot provide the means to do his fighting in the proper way, he ought to give it up, and you and he should employ your army in some other way. Set the soldiers at some profitable work, and then the kingdom will not be so poor."

The general could not help thinking that this was very good advice, and when he went home and told his story, his king agreed with him. The kingdom lay between two seas, and the soldiers were set to work to cut a canal right through the middle of the country, from one sea to the other.

Then the ships belonging to the neighboring kingdoms were allowed to sail through this canal, and charged a heavy toll. In this way the kingdom became very prosperous, and everybody agreed that it was a great deal better than carrying on wars and always being beaten.

The wizard next spoke to the young man who wanted to know how to make gold out of horseshoes.

"I think you will have to give up your idea," he declared. "The best metal-workers here have failed in the undertaking, and I myself have tried, for many years, to turn old iron into gold, but never could do it. Indeed, it is one of the things which magicians cannot do. Are you so poor that you are much in need of gold?"

"Oh, no," said the young man. "I am not poor at all. But I would like very much to be able to make gold whenever I please."

"The best thing you can do," said the wizard, "if you really wish to work in metals, is to make horseshoes out of gold. This will be easier than the other plan, and will not worry your mind so much."

The young man stood aside. He did not say anything, but he looked very much disappointed.

This ended the wizard's cases, and Filamina now began to do her part. She first called up the greedy king who wanted the adjoining kingdom.

"Here is a bottle," she said, "which contains a very bad disease for an old person and a very bad one for a child. Whenever you feel that you would like the old king and the young heir, who stand between you and the kingdom you want, to be sick, take a good drink from the bottle."

The greedy king snatched the bottle, and, as soon as he reached home, he took a good drink, and he had the rheumatism and the colic so bad that he never again wished to make anybody sick.

"As for you," said Filamina to the beautiful damsel who had lost her lover, "my fairy messengers have not been able to find any person, such as you describe, who is not married and settled. So your lover must have married some one else. And, as you cannot get him, I think the best thing you can do is to marry this young man, who wanted to make horseshoes into gold. Of course, neither of you will get exactly what you came for, but it will be better than going away without anything."

The beautiful damsel and the young man stepped aside and talked the matter over, and they soon agreed to Filamina's plan, and went away quite happy.

"I am dreadfully sorry," said Filamina to the old woman who

wanted to know how to make good root-beer, and who sat in the sedan-chair which had been sent for her, "but we have tried our best to find out how to make good root-beer, and the stuff we brewed was awful. I have asked this learned witch about it, and she says she does not now possess the secret. I have also offered a reward to any one who can tell me how to do it, but no one seems to want to try for it."

At this moment, the penitent hippogriff came forward from a dark corner where he had been sitting, and said: "I know what you must use to make good root-beer."

"What is it?" asked Filamina.

"Roots," said the hippogriff.

"That's perfectly correct," said the witch. "If a person will use roots, instead of all sorts of drugs and strange decoctions, they will make root-beer that is really good."

A great joy crept over the face of the old woman, and again and again she thanked Filamina for this precious secret.

The two giants raised her in her sedan-chair, and bore her away to her home, where she immediately set to work to brew root-beer from roots. Her beer soon became so popular that she was enabled to support her sons and daughters in luxury, and to give each of her grandchildren an excellent education.

When all the business was finished, and the penitent hippogriff had been given his reward, Filamina said to the high-born boy:

"Now it is all over, and everybody has had something done for him or for her."

"No," said the other, "I do not think so. Nothing has been done for you. You ought not to be left here alone with all these creatures. You may be used to them, but I think they're horrible. You gave me some advice which was very good, and now I am going to give you some, which perhaps you may like. I think you

ought to allow this wizard and this witch, who seem like very honest people, to stay here and carry on the business. Then you could leave this place, and go to school, and learn all the things

FILAMINA AND THE HIGH-BORN BOY RIDE AWAY.

that girls know who don't live in old magical castles. After a while, when you are grown up, and I am grown up, we could be married, and we could both rule over my principality. What do you think of that plan?"

"I think it would be very nice," said Filamina, "and I really believe I will do it."

It was exactly what she did do. The next morning, her white horse was brought from the castle stables, and side by side, and amid the cheers and farewells of the giants, the dwarfs, the gnomes, the fairies, the afrits, the genii, the pigwidgeons, the witch, the wizard, the ghosts, the penitent hippogriff, and the faithful hobgoblin, Filamina and the high-born boy rode away to school.

DERIDO; OR, THE GIANT'S QUILT.

THERE was once a giant who had a patch-work quilt, and this is the way he got it:

One warm morning, the giant, whose name was Derido, was very tired, and laid down under a tree to take a nap. The tree was a palm-tree, and, having a great tuft of leaves at the top of a tall stem, it could not be expected to give enough shade for a full-sized giant; but Derido, when he laid down, put his head in the small spot of shade that the palm-leaves afforded, and as for the rest of his body, he did not care. After a while, the sun got higher and higher, and the spot of shade moved nearer and nearer the base of the tree, and poor Derido's upturned face was soon exposed to the full blaze of the fiery sun. But being very tired, he slept soundly, and knew nothing about either sunshine or shade.

Derido was a good, kind, honorable giant—not very old, but large for his age, and had been noted, from the time when he was a very little boy, no bigger than a horse, for being always ready to help other people. It was the exercise of this trait of his character that had made him so tired this warm morning.

For about a week, he had been absent from home on various errands of benevolence. Among other things, he conferred a great benefit upon the people of a certain country by bringing to jus-

tice an old sorceress, who, for many years, had been worrying and tormenting the whole population. When Derido heard of this, he resolved to have her punished, and so he caught her napping, one day, and took her to a friend of his, who was a magician, and had her turned into a sewing-woman, and compelled, for the rest of her life, to make shirts at the rate of two loaves of bread a piece, and if there were frills to the bosoms, a penny-roll extra. It must be admitted that this was very hard on the old witch, but she was so extremely malicious and depraved that she deserved the worst she could get.

When the giant had got through with this business, he had gone to the assistance of the king of a small country, who had but few soldiers, and whose dominions were invaded by a powerful king, with a large army. Derido arrived just as a battle was about to commence, and instantly saw that the little army had not a shadow of a chance.

So he went straight to the king of the small country, and asked to be made Head General of his forces. The king immediately consented, and put his army under command of the giant.

"But," said the king, "how will the enemy know you to be the Head General? I have no feathers or sashes or medals big enough for you."

"Never mind," said Derido; "when we get to work they will find out I 'm General, without any sashes and feathers."

So, at the head of his little army, Derido marched right close down in front of the enemy. When the commanders of the large army saw that Derido was among their opponents, they began to change their minds about having a battle, and sent a flag of truce to him.

"Do you belong to this army?" asked the man who bore the flag.

"Oh! yes," said Derido, "I 'm Head General."

The man then galloped back to his king, and reported. Directly he returned with his flag.

"His Majesty begs me to assure you that he has had a very pleasant journey through part of your king's dominions, and is sorry he can't stay longer, but pressing affairs call him immediately home"

"Oh! he must n't go until I see him," said Derido. "Ask him to come over."

So the king of the invaders thought he had better come, and Derido said to him:

"I 'm sorry to see you are in such a hurry to return. You surely cannot have got all you wanted of our king."

"Oh! yes, yes," said the other; "we only wanted a little trip—just a little trip."

"You 're entirely too modest," said the giant. "Now, I 'm pretty sure I know what you came for. You heard that our people had a great quantity of corn in the public granaries that they could neither use nor sell. I believe that you came to buy that corn, but you do n't like to say so."

"Now I come to think of it, I do want some corn," said the king: "I 'll take all you 've got to spare. Just send it over to my camp, and I 'll have the money ready. Good-day:" and he turned to go, but just happening to think of something, he came back, and said to Derido: "Is this a permanent situation that you 've got?"

"Yes," said the giant; "whenever there 's war, I'm Head General of this army."

"Good-day," said the king; "I do n't know when I shall be able to get around this way again. Remember me to your king;" and off he went.

Every man of the invading army went home with a great bag of corn on his back, and when the inhabitants of the small kingdom saw a cart-load of gold dumped down into the public vaults, they were so delighted that they had a grand celebration, and all the children had holiday; all the toy and candy shops were declared free, and the boys and girls went in and took just what they liked best, and the king paid for it all.

On his way home from this kingdom, the giant had tired himself still more, but this time it was for his own gratification. Coming along by the sea-shore, he found a great anchor. Thinking it might be of use some day, he picked it up and hung it to his belt. Then it struck him that it would be a good idea to go a-fishing, and, accordingly, he stopped at a fishing village and bought about two miles of stout rope. He then walked some distance further on, to where the sea was very deep, and where it was a great place for whales. Going out on the top of a high promontory, and having tied his anchor to the end of the rope, he stood and watched for a whale to come up and blow. He soon saw one, about a mile and a half off, and whirling the anchor around his head, he let it fly, and it went clear out to the end of the rope and sunk into the sea, with the line right over the whale's back. The giant pulled in, ever so quick, hoping to hook his fish when he jerked the anchor up against him, but the old whale slipped from under the rope, and went swimming away, with as much of a smile on his face as it is possible for a whale to have. Poor Derido had to haul in his anchor, which was troublesome to do, for it continually caught on things at the bottom, and when he got it in at last, he determined that the next whale should not escape him so easily. He then broke off one of the flukes of the anchor, and bent the other one out straight, so that it and the shank were like one long piece of iron. When he had sharpened

the arrow-headed end of the fluke, he had a first-rate harpoon—that is, for a person of his size. So he stood again and watched for a whale, and when one rose, he sent his harpoon whizzing through the air, and aimed it so truly that it went deep into the whale's fat side and hooked him tight. But the giant had a very hard time hauling him in. The whale was a good big one, and he struggled, and jerked, and pulled back, nearly hard enough to move a church; but Derido was a match for him. He went to work like a good fellow, and hauled in his rope, hand over hand, and there was nothing for the whale to do but to come too. When he got his fish into shallow water, Derido waded in, and, picking him up, slung him over his shoulder and carried him high and dry on shore, where he let him flop and roll until he got used to being out of the water. When the whale got thus far, he died.

It was afternoon by this time, and so the giant took his whale on his back, and having gathered up his fishing-cord and harpoon, he started for home. Derido lived in his mother's castle, and he thought that she would be very glad to see him bring home so much nice fish. But after he had walked about an hour or two, he began to think that he would not take his whale home.

"If I do," he said to himself, "I know just what will happen. There will be roast whale to-morrow, and cold whale the next day, and after that, whale-hash for a day or two more. No, I won't take it home; I'll give it to somebody who needs it more than we do."

He had not gone far before he saw a man standing on a high rock, with a stone in his hand, looking about him in every direction. The giant stopped and asked him what he was trying to do.

"Why," said the man, "perhaps a bird may fly by after a while, and if it does, I shall throw this stone at it, and if I hit it we shall have it for supper."

"*We*," said the giant, "who are *we?*"

"Why, myself, and my wife, and our five children," said the man; "who should we be but us?"

"Well, do you pretend to say that one of those small birds which fly about here will be enough supper for seven people?" asked Derido, putting down the whale.

"No; it won't be anything like enough, but we often have to put up with as little. The children eat all they can pick from a bird, and then my wife and I suck the bones."

"Upon my word," said the giant, "I shouldn't think any of you would get very fat on that sort of living. It is too bad that you should have such miserable fare, and so I will give you this whale that I have just caught. You can have some of it right away for your suppers, and if you cut the rest up and dry it, it will last your whole family for a year or two."

"People don't eat whale," said the man.

"How do you know?" asked the giant. "Did you ever hear of any one who had tasted it and didn't like it? Did you ever try it yourself? I should think a person as badly off as you would be glad to try whale-meat, before you say it's not eatable."

"I don't want to try it," said the man, looking about to see if he could find a bird. "People would laugh if they saw me cutting up a whale for food. But I'll tell you what I will do; I'll take the skin for a carpet for our best room. We have n't got any carpet on it."

"Not if I know it," said the giant, throwing his fish back on his shoulder, "no whale for you to-day, my friend." And he marched off, provoked that he had stopped to talk to such a blockhead of a man.

It soon became dark, and as the sky was cloudy, and there was no moon, it was very dark indeed. The giant had great

difficulty in keeping on his journey, for he could not see a step before him. Directly he walked into a river, and wet his legs badly, and as he floundered across, he felt very much inclined to throw the whale away, for he had trouble enough in getting along without having to carry that heavy fish. But he did hate to waste anything, and so he carried it on, wondering to what use he could put it. Directly a thought struck him.

"The old thing is full of oil," said he to himself, "and I have a great mind to light it."

No sooner said than done. He had just run against a tall young tree, so he drew his sword and cut it down, and trimming off the top, he ran the trunk into the whale's mouth, and down into its body, so as to make a handle. Then he cut off the tail, and the oil came bubbling out. Taking from his pocket a flint and steel and some tinder, he lighted some dry leaves, made a blaze, and set fire to the tail-end of the whale. The oil blazed quite lively, as the giant held it up by the trunk of the tree, and soon it was burning so brightly that he could see just as well as he wanted to. Shouldering his great torch, he marched off gayly. The whale burnt fiercer and fiercer, the lower the flame got down, and soon the whole country around the giant, as he strode along, was as bright as day. The cocks commenced to crow, the birds to sing, and the grasshoppers and beetles got up and began to look for their breakfasts. As to the owls and nighthawks, they all went to bed, and the giant walked on with the whale over his shoulder, blazing away like a young volcano. When daylight appeared, the whale was nearly all burned up, and he threw it away, very glad that he had been able to make such a good use of it. As the sun rose, the clouds passed away, and everything was bright and lovely. So when the giant reached the palm-tree that we mentioned before, he sat down and ate a few

bushels of crackers he had in his pocket, and then thought he would take a nap. This place was dry, and the sun was warm; so he put his head in the shade and went to sleep; and the shade had moved and his face had been in the sunshine for about an hour, when a princess came riding by.

Her name was Falema, and she was very unhappy. She was unhappy because she was going to be married in a day or two. She was not grieving because she did not love the young king, Gantalor, to whom she was engaged, but because the wedding was to come off before she was ready. The young king was a very fine fellow, but he was nearly always at war. In a day or two he was to have a short peace, and he wanted to get married before he had to go to war again. So Falema's father had settled it that the wedding was to come off the day that Gantalor's peace should commence. Falema was not ready for this great affair. There had been such short notice, that only part of her dresses were made up, and it distressed her greatly to think that she would not make a proper appearance in her husband's palace, if she should be married so soon. So she was unhappy, and had gone out that morning on her pony, attended by her ladies and a few slaves, to see if the fresh air would do her good. When she suddenly came upon the giant lying under the tree, she was frightened, but some of her people told her it was Derido, and that he would hurt nobody. So then she began to pity him, lying there with his face all exposed to the sun.

"It's dreadful," said she. "He will get freckled."

So she took out her handkerchief, and all her ladies took out their handkerchiefs, and they spread them over such parts of the giant's face as they could reach; but they did not begin to cover it. Then they tried their sun-umbrellas, but they did not amount to very much, either.

"If he had his head over there, near the root of that tree," said one of the ladies, "he would be all right."

"Well, let's wake him up," said the Princess, "and make him move."

So they pushed at him, and thumped at him, the Princess, ladies, slaves, and all, but they did not disturb him in the least.

One of the slaves proposed to stick him a little with their spears, but the Princess would not allow that.

"Well," said another of the ladies, "we can't move him, and we can't move the tree, so we had better go on and let him alone."

"I don't know about moving the tree," said the Princess. "Here, you slaves, just take your swords, and cut down that palm-tree, and be very careful it don't fall on the giant."

So the slaves took their swords, and cut down the tree, and, as they were very careful, it did not fall on the giant.

Then, by the Princess's orders, they cut about half of the trunk off, and the upper part, with the broad-spreading leaves above, looked very much like an enormous umbrella.

"Now stick it up somewhere, near him," said the Princess, "so that it will shade his head."

They tried it in several places, but nowhere would it shade his whole face; so one of the ladies suggested that they should stick the tree into his mouth, which was stretched open quite wide enough for the purpose.

This suggestion being approved of, the slaves climbed up and put it into his mouth, and it stood up nicely and shaded his whole face. Then the Princess and her retinue rode off.

After a little while, the giant began to dream that he was cutting a new tooth. It made him uneasy, and he soon awoke. When he saw the upper part of a palm-tree sticking out of his

mouth, he was at first afraid that he had swallowed the roots, and the rest of it, but he soon found that it was not so. He took it out, and sat up; and then he saw, at a distance, the Princess and her party returning.

So he imagined that they had something to do with the matter, and he laid down quickly, and put the palm umbrella back in his mouth, and made believe to be asleep.

When the Princess came up, she said: "Well! if the poor giant isn't asleep yet. I am glad he is more comfortable than he was."

And then she was going to ride away, but the giant put out his hand, and caught her up in it, horse and all.

She was very much frightened at this, and screamed, and all her people ran away; but the giant sat up, and looked so good-humored, and spoke so kindly, that the Princess soon became quieted, and the people came back and stood near her.

Derido put the Princess, horse and all, on his knee, and she smoothed her hair down, and fixed her ribbons straight, and began to talk to her big acquaintance.

She told him how she had had the palm-tree stuck up in his mouth, and they both laughed very much, and the giant was much obliged. It must have been comical to hear them laughing, for there was about as much difference in their voices, as there is between a cherry-stone and a prize pumpkin. Then Falema, who loved dearly to talk, went on, and told the giant why she was unhappy.

"That's too bad," said Derido. "And he won't wait until your dresses are finished, eh? How many have you got done?"

"Only about forty," said the Princess, "and there never was anybody married out of our family with less than a hundred new dresses."

"And how long would it take to finish them all?" asked the giant.

"Oh! it would take three or four days more, for I've got all the seamstresses in the kingdom, and they work as hard as ever they can, and they can't do any more, unless they work at night, and you know I won't allow that."

"Certainly not," said Derido. "Poor things, it would kill them, sooner or later. I will tell you what I will do for a kind young lady like you. You say that the young King Gantalor is only anxious to have the wedding so soon because his peace is to commence in a day or two?"

"That's it," said Falema. "If this last war of his had continued a little longer, I should have been ready."

"Well now," said the giant, "this is what I will do: I will go to-morrow, and make war against him, and I'll fight him until your dresses are done."

"O, you dear, good giant!" cried Falema. "But you mustn't kill or wound him."

"I'll not hurt a hair of his head," said Derido. "But how shall I know when your dresses are done?"

"Oh! I will send you some of the pieces that are left," replied the Princess, "and then you may be sure that they are done; for as long as dresses are making, the pieces are always want for covering cord and for little gores, and such things."

"Certainly," said the giant, "and to shrivel up for trimmings."

"Shrivel up!" said the Princess, laughing, "you mean flute."

"Perhaps I do," said Derido. "But I must go now, and you must not forget to send me the pieces when all is ready."

So the Princess was put down, and she galloped away home with the good news, and that day she treated all her seamstresses to wine and cake, and a linsey-woolsey short-gown a piece.

Early the next morning, the giant appeared before the palace of Gantalor, where his army was all drawn up, ready to be dismissed for a short furlough. The royal treasurer was there, with his money-bags, to pay them off, and the soldiers were just going to stack their spears in the courtyard.

"Halloo!" said the giant; "what's up now?"

"Oh! you see," said the young king, "we are about to have a short peace, and my men are going home for a while."

"That's bad," said Derido, "for I came here to make war on you."

"Is that so?" said Gantalor; and then, turning to his army, he shouted: "Put away those money-bags! 'Tention battalions! Shoulder spears! By the right flank, wheel! Forward, march!" And springing on his horse, he put himself at the head of his army.

"It seems to me that you are in an awful hurry," said Derido. "This is no place to fight, but I know of a splendid battle-ground, and I will show you where it is."

So the giant led the way, and Gantalor and his whole army went after him, to the good place for a battle that he had spoken of. After marching a long time, Gantalor called out:

"Halloo there, Derido! I should think that by this time we had gone far enough."

"Oh! no," replied the giant, "we havn't got there yet. Don't be impatient. It's an excellent place that I am taking you to, and it's a great deal better to do things right, while you are about it."

"Oh! yes," said the king, who was very fair in all his dealings, "certainly, I want to have things all right, while we are about them."

So they marched on until they came to a beautiful level plain, and the giant said that was the place, and Gantalor agreed that

it was a very good place indeed for a battle. Then the giant chose his position, and the king chose his, and then it was night, and the giant said they would begin to go to work early in the morning. The king was all ready to fight right away, but the giant did not approve of night battles, and so they all encamped until morning.

Early the next day the young king arose, and the first thing he saw was the giant hard at work carrying great rocks, and piling them up in a line on the place he had chosen.

"Halloo!" cried Gantalor, "what are you doing there?"

"Making a fort," said the giant.

"O bother!" cried the king; "we don't want a fort. It will take ever so long to build one."

"It's all very well for you folks to talk that way," said Derido. "There are thousands of you, and only one of me. What do you suppose I should do if you were to get around in my rear?"

"That's so," said the king. "I suppose you must have a fort. But hurry up with it."

The giant went to work, and spent the whole morning piling rocks; and Gantalor, supposing that his intended father-in-law might think it strange that he was not on hand on the wedding-day, wrote and sent him a letter, explaining why the ceremony would have to be postponed for a little while. After dinner the young king went out to see how the giant was coming on, and he found that he was not half done.

"Halloo!" cried he; "how long are you going to keep me waiting here? I thought you'd be done by this time."

"It's very easy to talk," said the giant, "but if you really felt in such a hurry, as you say you do, you would send some of those lazy soldiers of yours to help me."

"That's so," said Gantalor. "Here, you lazy soldiers, every one of you take a spade and help this giant build his fort. We'll never have a battle if we go on this way."

Then all the soldiers took spades, and they went to work to help the giant, and by night the fort was done.

It was a fine, large, high fort, and the spaces between the rocks were all nicely filled in with earth and smoothed over. By the time it was done, night came on, and they all encamped and slept well till morning. Early the next day, the young king got up, and saw the giant walking around the outside of his fort.

"Why don't you get in, and let us begin?" cried Gantalor. "That's a good fort you've got now."

"Yes," said Derido. "When it gets a deep ditch around it, it will be as good a fort as I ever saw."

"Ditch!" cried the enraged young king. "I don't know what it is you will want next! I'm not going to wait here until you make a ditch."

"Why, of course I must have a ditch," cried the giant, loud enough to be heard a mile or two. "Didn't you say we were going to have this thing all right, while we were about it? Just answer me that, if you please! And I'd like to know what's to hinder your soldiers from walking right up to my fort, in the night while I'm asleep, and climbing over, if I haven't a ditch!"

"Well," said Gantalor, "I suppose you ought to have a ditch. Here, you lazy soldiers, take every one of you a spade, and dig the giant a ditch around his fort, and don't be any longer about it than you can help."

So they all went to work, and dug the ditch, and that took until afternoon; and then a canal had to be made, nearly a mile long, to bring water from the river to fill the ditch, and then it was night, and they all slept well until morning.

Very early indeed, the giant got up, and smoothed over a large patch of soft earth, right in the middle of his fort, and taking a great sharp-pointed stick, he wrote on the ground, in huge letters:

"GONE FOR PROVISIONS—BACK SOON."

Then he stepped over the wall of his fort, ditch and all, and ran home as fast as he could go. When he reached his mother's castle, it was breakfast-time, and he told her his adventures, and she laughed heartily over them, and they had such a pleasant time at the table that they each drank two tubs of coffee, whereas they generally took one. During the morning the giant's mother fixed him up a great basket of provisions, containing seventeen barrels of flour, four of bran flour, nine hundred hams, forty bushels of crackers, one hundred pounds of cheese, a thousand boxes of sardines, one hundred dozen lemons, a hundred pounds of sugar, a thousand pounds of dried beef, ten firkins of butter, a thousand bottles of pickles, and ever so many other things that she thought he might want, if the siege held out for a few days.

These things were tolerably heavy, of course, and Derido did not make very good time going back. It was sunset before he saw his fort in the distance.

In the morning of that day, not long after the giant had left, the king had got up early, and arranged his troops for the battle. As the giant was not to be seen, they thought, of course, that he was sheltering himself behind his fortifications. So, Gantalor, who was a splendid soldier, drew his men up in line, and put them into position, and marched them here, and marched them there, and took possession of certain positions to the right, and took possession of other positions to the left, and held some of his men in reserve, and put others in the advance, and fixed up tents for hospitals, and got

his portable bridges to the front, and by dinner-time every thing was ready for the grand attack, even to the slight intrenchments necessary to protect certain portions of the army from the giant's missiles, After a hurried dinner, the grand charge was sounded, and the soldiers rushed forward, and they bridged the ditch, and crossed the bridges, and stormed the walls, and waved their flags, and shouted, "Victory!" and jumped down into the inside, and found written there:

"GONE FOR PROVISIONS—BACK SOON."

You would better believe that when King Gantalor saw this, he was angry. For a half hour or so, he was so angry that he did not know what to do with himself, but then he cooled down, and remembering that Derido would certainly keep his word, and come back, he drew off his men, and resolved to attack the giant as soon as he returned, and nothing was to be allowed to prevent.

When Derido got tolerably near the fort, he saw that it had been attacked, and supposing that Gantalor would be mad enough when he found it empty, he thought he had better rest a little; and so he did, and did not reach his fort until after dark, when the king and all his forces had gone to bed.

Before daylight the next morning, Gantalor had his men all in position, and when the giant awoke and stood up, Gantalor shouted to him: "Look out there! We're going to begin! No more fooling now! Bridges to the front! Stormers, forward, march! Spearmen, ready, aim, fire!"

And instantly the men with the portable bridges ran down to the ditch, and the storming parties followed them, and the spearmen sent their weapons flying through the air. Then the men with bows aimed their arrows at the giant, and those with catapults sent rocks whizzing round his head, and he felt like a boy in a hornet's nest.

He had hardly expected they would commence so soon, and he did not know what to do. As for really fighting them, he had determined not to do that, or he could have drawn his great sword, and chopped the whole army up fine, in about three-quarters of an hour. The stones, and arrows, and spears came thicker and thicker. Numbers of soldiers had crossed the ditch, and were already on top of the walls, and they could take such good aim from their new positions, that several missiles had already struck Derido in the face. A spear hit him on the side of the nose.

"There!" he cried. "If that nasty thing had gone in my eye, it would have made me mad."

He had provided himself with no ammunition whatever, and now that the fighting was getting to be at such close quarters, he looked for something with which to defend himself. He was so big that it was of no use to try to get behind anything. As he looked around, he saw his pickle-jars, and, breaking a number of them, he commenced hurling handfuls of pickles at his assailants. When a pickle hit a man in the face, the man howled, I can tell you; and, for a while, Derido kept the enemy back with these sour missiles. But a thousand jars of pickles will not last a giant long, when he uses them in that way, and the supply was soon exhausted. And now the soldiers were coming in on all sides. Gantalor was on the walls, shouting to his men and waving his sword above his head, and Derido was hit by something or other every moment, and as the men were nearer, the hits were harder. There was nothing for him to throw, but great hard things, which might kill people; and so, making a very wry face, Derido ran to the rear-wall, made a skip right over it and the ditch, and evacuated the fort.

What a shout the soldiers then set up!

Gantalor waved his hat and his sword, and if he had had more hands, he would have waved his coat and his boots, and he shouted: "Victory! victory!"

And all the soldiers shouted "Victory!" till they were hoarse. The excitement was so great, that every man in the army rushed pell-mell into the fort, even the reserve corps and those left in charge of the hospital-tents.

As for the giant, he sat down on the ground outside, and picked the arrows out of his clothes.

When the enthusiasm had somewhat subsided, Gantalor ordered the seventeen barrels of flour to be piled up, end on end, until they made a high column, and then he got on the top of them, and summoned the giant to deliver himself up.

"Not to-day, if you please," said Derido; "I've only changed my base. Now then," he cried, "just let me see any of you fellows come out of that fort. You're all my prisoners, every man of you!" And he jumped up, and drew his sword, and commenced rushing around the outside of the ditch, chopping his sword into the ground, and whirling it over his head in such a terrible way, that Gantalor got down off the flour-barrels in a hurry, and the soldiers crouched down behind the walls, as close as they could get. Not one of them would have dared to climb over the walls while that terrible giant was slashing his great sword about in that way. When Derido got tired of this exercise, he sat down near the fort and began throwing great stones across it, just grazing the tops of the walls. As all the stones went clear over, they hurt nobody, but if any one had been on top of the walls, it would have been bad for that person. The giant was a good shot with a stone or young rock, and every now and then he made one just scratch the top of the earthworks, causing the dirt and gravel to fly like hailstones.

Gantalor and his army began to think that they had got themselves into a bad fix. It was impossible to get over those walls (there was no entrance-way) while the giant was hurling stone after stone in that style, and all their stores, and provisions, and spare arms were outside, in the camp.

The giant amused himself in this way for quite a long time, but at last, while turning round, and reaching back for a big stone, he saw a man on horseback riding toward him as fast as he could come. As soon as the man reached him, he handed Derido a big bag, filled with the pieces that were left of the Princess's dresses.

The moment the giant saw the pieces in the bag, he sprang to his feet, jerked out of his pocket a great white handkerchief, as big as the mainsail of a ship, and sticking his sword into it, he waved it round his head, shouting at the top of his voice:

"I surrender! I surrender!"

Gantalor and his men stood up in amazement at the strange sight of the giant surrendering just when he had the best of them; but they were still more amazed when Derido stepped over the wall, right into their midst, and shouted to the king, while still frantically waving his white flag over his head:

"Go home, Gantalor, and marry your princess! Give her my love, and tell her to teach you the value of a peaceful life. If there are any battles to be fought, let me know, and I'll do your fighting for you. As for you, soldiers, you can have my provisions; I shan't need them. I'm going home. The war's over."

With these words, he jumped over the walls, and strode off home as fast as he could go, his white flag still fluttering over his shoulder.

Gantalor looked after him for a few minutes, and then he said:

"If there is a lunatic asylum in the country big enough, that giant ought to be put in it!"

Then he gave orders to pack up and march home. As he was watching the men break up their camp, he said:

"A war with the giant has one good thing about it. Look at these hospital-tents; they haven't been needed at all."

When the young king reached his palace, he left his men there, and, with a few followers, he went straight on to Falema's father's kingdom.

When he came near the royal residence, there, on the balcony, he saw the princess, dressed in a lovely gown of pink chenille; and behind her, in a row, all her seamstresses, in their nice new linsey-woolsey short-gowns, eating calves-foot jelly with golden spoons, to refresh themselves after their hard labors.

The next day, the young King Gantalor and the Princess Falema were married, and she led him such a happy life, that he never cared to go to war again. And, strange to say, he found that when he did not want to fight anybody, nobody seemed to want to fight him. The officers of his army came to the wedding, and each of them the next day married one of the princess's seamstresses, and each couple had a house and garden given them, and they lived happily, and got very fat. The common soldiers, married anybody that would have them, just like other people, and they each had a house and garden given them, and lived as happily, and got just as fat as the officers.

As for the giant, he took the pieces of the princess's dresses home to his mother, who made him a patchwork quilt out of them, and he slept under it for a long time; but I think it must be entirely worn out now.

THE CASTLE OF BIM.

LORIS was a little girl, about eleven years old, who lived with her father, in a very small house among the mountains of a distant land. He was sometimes a wood-cutter, and sometimes a miner, or a ploughman, or a stone-breaker. Being an industrious man he would work at anything he could do when a chance offered, but as there was not much work to do in that part of the country, poor Jorn often found it very hard to make a living for himself and Loris.

One day, when he had gone out early to look for work, Loris was in her little sleeping-room under the roof, braiding her hair. Although she was so poor, Loris always tried to make herself look as neat as she could, for that pleased her father. She was just tying the ribbon on the end of the long braid, when she heard a knock at the door below. "In one second," she said to herself, "I will go. I must tie this ribbon tightly, for it would never do to lose it."

And so she tied it, and ran down-stairs to the door; there was no one there.

"Oh, it is too bad!" cried Loris. "Perhaps it was some one with a job for father. He told me always to be very careful about answering a knock at the door, for there was no knowing when some one might come with a good job, and now some one

has come, and gone," cried Loris, looking about in every direction for the person who had knocked. "Oh, there he is! How could he have got away so far in such a short time? I must run after him."

So away she ran as fast as she could, after a man she saw, walking away from the cottage in the direction of a forest.

LORIS FOLLOWS THE SHORT MAN.

"Oh, dear!" she said, as she ran, "How fast he walks! and he is such a short man, too! He is going right to the hut of Laub, that wicked Laub, who is always trying to get away work from father, and he came first to our house, but thought there was nobody at home."

Loris ran and ran, but the short man did walk very fast. However, she gradually gained on him, and just as he reached

Laub's door, she seized him by the coat. "Stop—sir, please," she said, scarcely able to speak, she was so out of breath. The man turned and looked at her. He was a very short man, indeed, for he scarcely reached to Loris' waist.

"What do you want?" he said, looking up at her.

"Oh, sir!" she gasped, "you came to our house first,—and I came to the door—almost as quick as I could—and if it's any work—father wants work—ever so bad."

"Yes," said the short man, "but Laub wants work too. He is very poor."

"Yes, sir," said Loris, "but—but you came for father first."

"True," said the short man, "but nobody answered my knock, and now I am here. Laub has four young children, and sometimes they have nothing to eat. It is never so bad with you, is it?"

"No, sir," said Loris.

"Your father has work sometimes, is it not so?"

"Yes, sir," answered Loris.

"Laub is often without work for weeks, and he has four children. Shall I go back with you, or knock here?"

"Knock," said Loris softly.

The short man knocked at the door, and instantly, there was heard a great scuffling and hubbub within. Shortly all was quiet, and then a voice said, "Come in."

"He did not wait so long for me," thought Loris.

The short man opened the door, and went in, Loris following him. In a bed, in the corner of the room, were four children; their heads just appearing above a torn sheet which was pulled up to their chins.

"Hello! what's the matter?" said the short man, advancing to the bed.

"Please, sir," said the oldest child, a girl of about the age of Loris, with tangled hair and sharp black eyes, "We are all sick, and very poor, and our father has no work. If you can give us a little money to buy bread——"

"All sick, eh!" said the short man. "Any particular disease?"

"We don't know about diseases, sir," said the girl, "we've never been to school."

"No doubt of that," said the man. "I have no money to give you, but you can tell your father that if he will come to the mouth of the Ragged Mine, to-morrow morning, he can have a job of work which will pay him well." So saying he went out. Loris followed him, but he simply waved his hand to her, and in a few minutes was lost in the forest.

Loris looked sadly after him, and then walked slowly towards her home.

The moment their visitors had gone, the Laub children sprang out of bed, as lively as crickets.

"Ha! Ha!" cried the oldest girl, "She came after him to get it, and he wouldn't give it to her, and father's got it. Served her right the horrid thing!" and all the children shouted, "Horrid thing!" One of the boys now ran out, and threw a stone after Loris, and then they sat down to finish eating a meat-pie, which had been given them.

"Well," said Jorn, that evening when Loris told him what had happened. "I'm sorry, for I found but little work to-day, but it can't be helped. You did all you could."

"No, father," said Loris. "I might have gone to the door quicker."

"That may be," said Jorn, "and I hope you will never keep any one waiting again."

Two or three days after this, as Loris was stooping over the

fire, in the back room of the cottage, preparing her dinner, she heard a knock.

Springing to her feet, she dropped the pan she held in her hand, and made a dash at the front door, pulling it open with a tremendous fling. No one should go away this time.

"Hello! Ho! ho!" cried a person outside, giving a skip backwards. "Do you open doors by lightning here?"

"No, sir," said Loris; "but I didn't want to keep you waiting."

"I should think not," said the other; "why I had hardly begun to knock."

This visitor was a middle-sized man, very slight, and, at first sight, of a youthful appearance. But his hair was either powdered or gray, and it was difficult to know whether he was old or young. His face was long and smooth, and he nearly always looked as if he was just going to burst out laughing. He was dressed in a silken suit of light green, pink, pale yellow and sky blue, but all the colors were very much faded. On his head was stuck a tall orange-colored hat, with a lemon-colored feather.

"Is your father in?" said this strange personage.

"No, sir," said Loris. "He will be here this evening, and I can give him any message you may leave for him."

"I haven't any message," said the other. "I want to see him."

"You can see him about sun-set," said Loris, "if you will come then."

"I don't want to come again. I think I'll wait," said the man.

Loris said, "very well," but she wondered what he would do all the afternoon. She brought out a stool for him to sit upon, for it was not very pleasant in the house, and there he sat for

some time looking at the chicken-house, where there were no chickens; and the cow-house, where there was no cow; and the pig-sty, where there were no pigs. Then he skipped up to the top of a little hillock near by, and surveyed the landscape. Loris kept her eye upon him, to see that he did not go away without leaving a message, and went on with her cooking.

When her dinner was ready she thought it only right to ask him to have some. She did not want to do it, but she could not see how she could help it. She had been taught good manners. So she went to the door, and called him, and he instantly came skipping to her.

"I thought you might like to have some dinner, sir," she said, "I haven't much, but——"

"Two people don't want much," he said, "where shall we have it? In the house, or will you spread the cloth out here on the grass?"

"There's not much use of spreading a cloth, sir," she said, "I have only one potato, and some salt."

"That's not a dinner," said the other cheerfully, "a dinner is soup, meat, some vegetables (besides potatoes, and there ought to be two of them, at least), some bread, some cheese, pudding and fruit."

"But, I haven't got all that, sir," said Loris, with her eyes wide open at this astonishing description of a dinner.

"Well then, if you haven't got them the next best thing is to go and get them."

Loris smiled faintly, "I couldn't do that, sir," she said, "I have no money."

"Well then, if you can't go the next best thing is for me to go. The village is not far away—just wait dinner a little while for me," and so saying he skipped away at a great pace.

Loris did not wait for him, but ate her potato and salt. "I'm glad he is able to buy his own dinner," she said, "but I'm afraid he won't come back. I wish he had left a message." But she need not have feared.

In a half-hour the queer man came back, bearing a great basket covered with a cloth. The latter he spread on the ground, and then set out all the things he had said were necessary to make up a dinner. He prepared a place at one end of the cloth for Loris, and one at the other end for himself.

THE NINKUM AND LORIS TAKE DINNER.

"Sit down," said he, seating himself on the grass, "Don't let things get cold."

"I've had my dinner," said Loris. "This is yours."

"Whenever you're ready to begin," said the man, lying back on the grass and looking placidly up to the sky, "I'll begin. But not until then."

Loris saw he was in earnest, and, as she was a sensible girl, she sat down at the end of the cloth.

"That's right," gaily cried the queer man, sitting up again, "I was a little afraid you'd be obstinate and then I should have starved."

When the meal was over, Loris said, "I never had such a good dinner in my life."

The man looked at her and laughed. "This is a funny world, isn't it?" said he.

"Awfully funny!" replied Loris, laughing.

"You don't know what I am, do you?" said the man to Loris, as she gathered up the dishes and put them, with what was left of the meal, into the basket.

"No, sir; I do not," answered Loris.

"I am a Ninkum," said the other. "Did you ever meet with one before?"

"No, sir, never," said Loris.

"I am very glad to hear that," he said. "It's so pleasant to be fresh and novel." And then he went walking around the house again, looking at everything he had seen before. Soon he laid himself down on the grass, near the house, with one leg thrown over the other and his hands clasped under his head. For a long time he lay in this way, looking up at the sky and the clouds. Then he turned his head, and said to Loris, who was sewing by the door-step:

"Did you ever think how queer it would be if everything in the world were reversed; if the ground were soft and blue, like the sky, and if the sky were covered with dirt and chips and grass, and if fowls and animals walked about on it, like flies sticking to a ceiling?"

"I never thought of such a thing in my life," said Loris.

"I often do," said the Ninkum, "It expands the mind."

For the whole afternoon the Ninkum lay on his back, and expanded his mind, and then, about sunset Loris saw her father returning. She ran to meet him, and told him of the Ninkum who was waiting to see him. Jorn hurried to the house, for he felt sure that his visitor must have an important job of work for him, as he had waited so long.

"I am glad you have come," said the Ninkum, "I wanted to see you very much, for two things. The first was that we might have supper. I'm dreadfully hungry, and I know there's enough in that basket for us all. The second thing can wait; it's business."

So Loris and the Ninkum spread out the remains of the dinner, and the three made a hearty supper. Jorn was highly pleased; he had expected to come home to a very different meal from this.

"Now, then," said the Ninkum, "We'll talk about the business."

"You have some work for me, I suppose," said Jorn.

"No," said the Ninkum, "none that I know of. What I want is for you to go into partnership with me."

"Partnership!" cried Jorn, "I don't understand you. What kind of work could we do together?"

"None at all," said the Ninkum, "for I never work. Your part of the partnership will be to chop wood, and mine, and plough, and do just what you do now. I will live here with you, and will provide the food, and the clothes, and the fuel, and the pocket-money for the three of us."

"But you couldn't live here," cried Loris, "our house is so poor, and there is no room for you."

"There need be no trouble about that," said the Ninkum, "I can build a room, right here, on this side of the house. I never work," he said to Jorn, "but I hate idleness. So what I want is to go into partnership with a person who will work,—an in-

dustrious person like you. Then my conscience will be at ease. Please agree as quickly as you can, for it's beginning to grow dark, and I hate to walk in the dark."

Jorn did not hesitate. He agreed instantly to go into partnership with the Ninkum, and the latter, after bidding them good-night, skipped gaily away.

The next day, he returned with carpenters, and laborers, and lumber, and timber, and furniture, and bedding, and a large and handsome room was built for him, on one side of the house, and he came to live with Jorn and Loris. For several days he had workmen putting a fence around the yard, and building a new cow-house, a new chicken-house, and a new pig-sty. He bought a cow, pigs and chickens, had flowers planted in front of the house, and made everything look very neat and pretty.

"Now," said he one day to Loris and Jorn as they were eating supper together, "I'll tell you something, I was told to keep it a secret, but I hate secrets; I think they all ought to be told as soon as possible. Ever so much trouble has been made by secrets. The one I have is this: That dwarf, who came here, and then went and hired old Laub to work in his mine ——"

"Was that a dwarf?" asked Loris, much excited.

"Yes, indeed," said the Ninkum, "a regular one. Didn't you notice how short he was? Well, he told me all about his coming here. The dwarfs in the Ragged Mine found a deep hole, with lots of gold at the bottom of it, but it steamed and smoked and was too hot for dwarfs. So the king dwarf sent out the one you saw, and told him to hire the first miner he could find, to work in the deep hole, but not to tell him how hot it was until he had made his contract. So the dwarf had to come first for you, Jorn, for you lived nearest the mine, but he hoped he would not find you, for he knew you were a good man. That was the reason he

just gave one knock, and hurried on to Laub's house. And then he told me how Loris ran after him, and how good she was to agree to let him give the work to Laub, when she thought he needed it more than her father. 'Now,' says he to me, 'I want to do something for that family, and I don't know anything better that could happen to a man like Jorn, than to go into partnership with a Ninkum.'"

At these words, Jorn looked over the well-spread supper-table, and he thought the dwarf was certainly right.

"So that's the way I came to live here," said the Ninkum, "and I like it first-rate."

"I wish I could go and see the dwarfs working in their mines," said Loris.

I'll take you," exclaimed the Ninkum. "It's not a long walk from here. We can go to-morrow."

Jorn gave his consent, and the next morning Loris and the Ninkum set out for the Ragged Mine. The entrance was a great jagged hole in the side of a mountain, and the inside of the mine had also a very rough and torn appearance. It belonged to a colony of dwarfs, and ordinary mortals seldom visited it, but the Ninkum had no difficulty in obtaining admission. Making their way slowly along the rough and sombre tunnel, Loris and he saw numbers of dwarfs, working with pick and shovel, in search of precious minerals.

Soon they met the dwarf who had come to Jorn's house, and he seemed glad to see Loris again. He led her about to various parts of the mine, and showed her the heaps of gold and silver and precious stones, which had been dug out of the rocks around them.

The Ninkum had seen these things before, and so he thought he would go and look for the hot hole, where Laub was working; that would be a novelty.

He soon found the hole, and just as he reached it, Laub appeared at its opening, slowly climbing up a ladder.

He looked very warm and tired, and throwing some gold ore upon the ground, from a basket which he carried on his back, he sat down and wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

THE NINKUM FINDS LAUB IN THE MINE.

"That is warm work, Laub," said the Ninkum, pleasantly.

"Warm!" said Laub, gruffly, "hot — hot as fire. Why the gold down at the bottom of that hole burns your fingers when you pick it up. If I hadn't made a contract with these

rascally dwarfs to work here for forty-one days, I wouldn't stay here another minute, but you can't break a contract you make with dwarfs."

"It's a pretty hard thing to have to work here, that is true," said the Ninkum, "but you owe your ill-fortune to yourself. It's all because you're known to be so ill-natured and wicked. When the dwarf was sent to hire a man to come and work in this hole, he had to go to Jorn's house first because that was the nearest place, but he just gave one knock there, and hurried away, hoping he didn't hear, for it would be a pity to have a good man like Jorn working in a place like this. Then he went after you, for he knew you deserved to be punished by this kind of work."

As the Ninkum said this, Laub's face grew black with rage.

"So that's the truth!" he cried, "when I get out of this place, I'll crush every bone in the body of that sneaking Jorn," and, so saying he rushed down into the hot hole.

"Perhaps I ought not to have told him all that," said the Ninkum, as he walked away, "but I hate secrets, they always make mischief."

When he joined Loris, the little girl said, "Let us go out of this place now. I have seen nearly every thing, and it is so dark and gloomy."

Taking leave of the kind dwarf, the two made their way out of the mine.

"I do not like such gloomy places any better than you do," said the Ninkum. "Disagreeable things are always happening in them. I like to have things bright and lively. I'll tell you what would be splendid! To make a visit to the castle of Bim."

"What is that, and where is it?" asked Loris.

"It's the most delightful place in the whole world," said the

Ninkum, "While you're there you do nothing and see nothing but what is positively charming, and every body is just as happy and gay as can be. It's all life and laughter, and perfect delight. I know you would be overjoyed if you were there."

"I should like very much to go," said Loris, "if father would let me."

"I'll go and ask him this minute," said the Ninkum. "I know where he is working. You can run home, and I will go to him, and then come and tell you what he says."

So Loris ran home, and the Ninkum went to the place where Jorn was cutting wood. "Jorn," said the Ninkum, "suppose that every thing in the world were reversed; that you chopped wood, standing on your head, and that you split your axe, instead of the log you struck. Would not that be peculiar?"

"Such things could not be," said Jorn, "what is the good of talking about them?"

"I think a great deal about such matters," said the Ninkum, "They expand my mind, and now, Jorn, reversibly speaking will you let Loris go with me to the castle of Bim?"

"Where is that?" asked Jorn.

"It is not far from here. I think we could go in half a day. I would get a horse in the village.

"And how long would you stay?"

"Well, I don't know. A week or two, perhaps. Come, now, Jorn, reversibly speaking, may she go?"

"No, indeed," said Jorn, "on no account shall she go. I could not spare her."

"All right," said the Ninkum, "I will not keep you from your work any longer. Good-morning."

As soon as he was out of Jorn's sight, the Ninkum began to run home as fast as he could.

"Get ready, Loris," he cried, when he reached the house. "Your father says, reversibly speaking, that on every account you must go. He can well spare you."

"But must we go now?" said Loris. "Cannot we wait until he comes home, and go to-morrow?"

"No, indeed," said the Ninkum. "There will be obstacles to our starting to-morrow. So let us hasten to the village, and hire a horse. Your father will get along nicely here by himself, and he will be greatly pleased with your improvement when you return from the castle of Bim."

So Loris, who was really much pleased with the idea of the journey, hastened to get ready, and having put the house-key under the front door-stone, she and the Ninkum went to the village, where they got a horse and started for the castle of Bim.

The Ninkum rode in front, Loris sat on a pillow behind, and the horse trotted along gaily. The Ninkum was in high good spirits, and passed the time in telling Loris of all the delightful things she would see in the castle of Bim.

Late in the afternoon, they came in sight of a vast castle, which rose up at the side of the road like a little mountain.

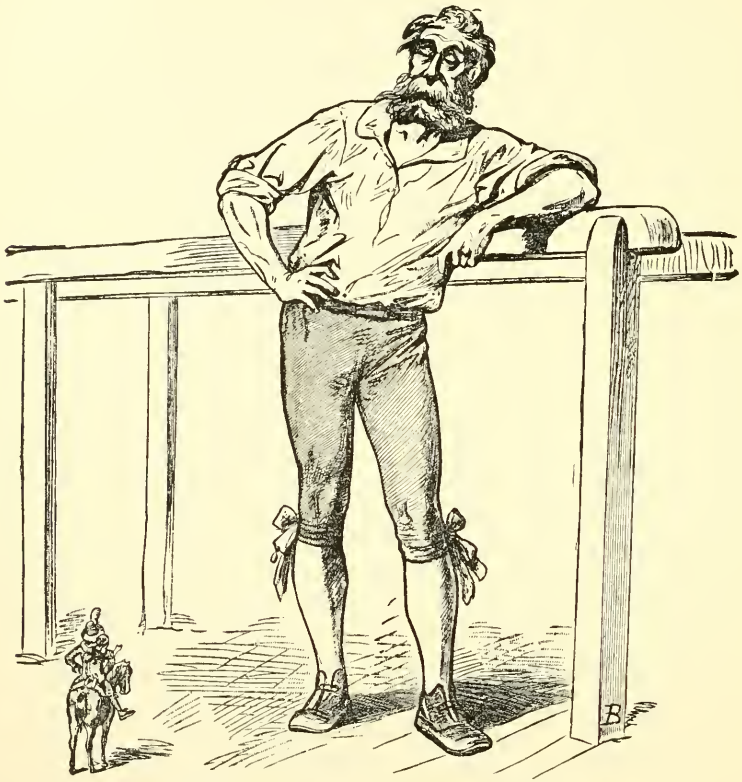
"Hurrah!" cried the Ninkum, as he spurred the horse. "I knew we were nearly there!"

Loris was very glad that they had reached the castle, for she was getting tired of riding, and when the Ninkum drew up in front of the great portals, she felt sure that she was going to see wonderful things, for the door, to begin with, was, she felt sure, the biggest door in the whole world.

"You need not get off," said the porter, who stood by the door, to the Ninkum, who was preparing to dismount, "you can ride right in."

Accordingly, the Ninkum and Loris rode right in to the castle

through the front door. Inside, they found themselves in a high and wide hall-way paved with stone, which led back to what appeared to be an inner court. Riding to the end of this hall,



THE GIANT WELCOMES HIS GUESTS.

they stopped in the door-way there, and looked out. In the centre of the court, which was very large, there stood side by side, and about twenty feet apart, two great upright posts, like the trunks of tall pine trees. Across these, near their tops, rested a

thick and heavy horizontal pole, and on this pole a giant was practising gymnastics.

Hanging by his hands, he would draw himself up, until his chin touched the pole. And again and again he did this, until the Ninkum said in a whisper, "Twelve times. I did not think he could do it."

The giant now drew up his legs, and threw them over the bar, above his head. Then, by a vigorous effort, he turned himself entirely over the bar, and hung beneath it by his hands. After stopping a minute or two to breathe, he drew up his legs again, and putting them under the bar, between his hands as boys do when they "skin the cat," he turned partly over, and hung in this position.

His face was now turned toward the doorway, and he first noticed his visitors.

"Hello!" said he to the Ninkum. "Could you do that?"

"Not on that pole," answered the Ninkum, smiling.

"I should think not," said the giant, dropping to his feet, and puffing a little. "Ten years ago, when I did not weigh so much, I could draw myself up twenty-seven times. Come in with me and have some supper. Is that your little daughter?"

"No," said the Ninkum, "I am her guardian for the present."

"Ride right up-stairs," said the giant, "My wife is up there and she will take care of the little girl."

"I am afraid," said the Ninkum, "that my horse cannot jump up those great steps."

"Of course not," said the giant. "Let me help you up, and then I will go down and bring your horses."

"Oh, that won't be necessary," said the Ninkum, and Loris laughed at the idea.

"You may want to look at the house," said the giant, "and then you will need them."

"So the giant took the Ninkum and Loris up-stairs, and then came down, and brought up the horses. The upper story was as vast and spacious as the lower part of the castle, and by a window the giant's wife sat, darning a stocking.

As they approached her, the Ninkum whispered to Loris: "If there were such holes in my stockings I should fall through." The giantess was very glad to see Loris, and she took her up in her hand, and kissed her, very much as a little girl would kiss a canary bird. Then the giant children were sent for—two big boys and a baby girl, who thought Loris was so lovely that she would have squeezed her to death, if her mother had allowed her to take the little visitor in her hands.

During supper, Loris and the Ninkum sat in chairs with long legs, like stilts, which the giant had had made for his men and women visitors. They had to be very careful, lest they should tip over and break their necks.

After supper, they sat in the great upper hall, and the giant got out his guitar and sang them a song.

"I hope there are not many more verses," whispered the Ninkum to Loris, "My bones are almost shaken apart,"

"How did you like that?" asked the giant, when he had finished

"It was very nice," said the Ninkum, "it reminded me of something I once heard before; I think it was a wagon-load of copper pots, rolling down a mountain, but I am not sure."

The giant thanked him, and soon after, they all went to bed Loris slept in the room with the giantess, on a high shelf where the children could not reach her.

Just before they went to their rooms the Ninkum said to Loris

"Do you know that I don't believe this is the Castle of Bim?"

"It didn't seem to be like the place you told me about," said Loris, "but what are we to do?"

"Nothing, but to go to bed," said the Ninkum. "They are very glad to see us, and to-morrow we will bid them good-bye, and push on to the Castle of Bim."

With this, the Ninkum jumped on his horse, and rode to his room.

The next day, after they had gone over the Castle and seen all its sights, the Ninkum told the giant that he and Loris must pursue their journey to the Castle of Bim.

"What is that?" said the giant, and when the Ninkum proceeded to describe it to him, he became very much interested.

"Ho! Ho! good wife!" he cried, "Suppose we go with these friends to the Castle of Bim. It must be a very pleasant place, and the exercise will do me good. I'm dreadfully tired of gymnastics. What do you say? We can take the children."

The giantess thought it would be a capital idea, and so they all put on their hats and caps, and started off, leaving the castle in charge of the giants' servants, who were people of common size.

They journeyed all that day. Loris and the Ninkum riding ahead, followed by the giant, then by the giantess carrying the baby, and lastly the two giant boys with a basket of provisions between them.

That night they slept on the ground, under some trees, and the Ninkum admitted that the Castle of Bim was a good deal further off than he had supposed it to be.

Toward afternoon of the next day they found themselves on some high land, and coming to the edge of a bluff, they saw

THE NINKUM AND HIS COMPANY ENTER THE CITY.

in the plain below, a beautiful city. The giant was struck with admiration.

"I have seen many a city," said he, "but I never saw one so sensibly and handsomely laid out as that. The people who built that place knew just what they wanted."

"Do you see that great building in the centre of the city?" cried the Ninkum. "Well, that is the Castle of Bim. Let us hurry down." So, away they all started, at their best speed, for the city.

They had scarcely reached one of the outer gates, when they were met by a citizen on horseback, followed by two or three others on foot. The horseman greeted them kindly, and said that he had been sent to meet them. "We shall be very glad," he said to the Ninkum, "to have you and the little girl come into our city to-night, but if those giants were to enter, the people, especially the children, would throng the streets to see them, and many would unavoidably be trampled to death. There is a great show tent out here, where they can very comfortably pass the night, and to-morrow we will have the streets cleared, and the people kept within doors. Then these great visitors will be made welcome to walk in and view the city."

The giants agreed to this, and they were conducted to the tent, where they were made very comfortable, while the Ninkum and Loris were taken into the city, and lodged in the house of the citizen who had come to meet them.

The next day the giants entered the city, and the windows and doors in the streets which they passed through, were crowded with spectators.

The giant liked the city better and better, as he walked through it. Everything was so admirably pleasing, and in such perfect order, The others enjoyed themselves very much, too,

and Loris was old enough to understand the beauty and conveniences of the things she saw around her.

Towards the end of the day, the Ninkum came to her.

"Do you know," said he, "that the Castle of Bim is not here? That large building is used by the governors of the city. And what a queer place it is! Everything that they do turns out just right. I saw a man set a rat-trap and what do you think? He caught the rat! I could not help laughing. It is very funny."

"But what are you going to do?" asked Loris.

"We will stay here to-night," said the Ninkum, "they are very kind,—and to-morrow we will go on to the Castle of Bim.'

The next day, therefore, our party again set out on their journey. The Ninkum had told the citizen, who had entertained him, where they were going and his accounts of the wonderful Castle induced this worthy man to go with him.

"In our city," said he, "we try to be governed in everything by the ordinary rules of common sense. In this way we get along very comfortably and pleasantly, and everything seems to go well with us. But we are always willing to examine into the merits of things which are new to us, and so I would like to go to this curious castle, and come back and report what I have seen to my fellow-citizens."

His company was gladly accepted, and all set out in high good humor, the citizen riding by the side of Loris and the Ninkum.

But when they had gone several miles, the giantess declared that she believed she would go back home. The baby was getting very heavy, and the boys were tired. The giant could tell her about the Castle of Bim when he came home.

So the giantess turned back with her children, her husband

kissing her good-bye, and assuring her that he would not let her go back by herself if he did not feel certain that no one would molest her on the way.

The rest of the party now went on at a good pace, the giant striding along as fast as the horses could trot. The Ninkum did not seem to know the way as well as he had said he did. He continually desired to turn to the right, and, when the others inquired if he was sure that he ought to do this, he said that the best thing a person could do when a little in doubt was to turn to the right.

The citizen did not like this method of reasoning, and he was about to make an objection to it, when a man was perceived, sitting, in doleful plight, by the side of the road. The Ninkum who was very kind-hearted, rode up to him, to inquire what had happened to him, but the moment the man raised his head, and before he had time to say a word, Loris slipped off her horse and threw her arms around his neck.

"Oh father! father!" she cried. "How came you here?"

It was indeed, Jorn, ragged, wounded and exhausted.

In a moment everyone set to work to relieve him. Loris ran for water and bathed his face and hands; the citizen gave him some wine, from a flask; the giant produced some great pieces of bread and meat; and the Ninkum asked him questions.

Jorn soon felt refreshed and strengthened, and then he told his story. He had been greatly troubled, when he found that Loris had gone away against his express orders.

"Why father," cried Loris, at this point, "you said I could go."

"Never," said Jorn, "I said you could not go."

"Reversibly speaking," said the Ninkum smiling, "he consented, that was the way I put the question to him. If I had not put it in that way, I should have told a lie."

Everybody looked severely at the Ninkum, and Loris was very angry, but her father patted her on the head, and went on with his story. He would have followed the Ninkum and his daughter, but he did not know what road they had taken, and as they were on a horse he could not in any case, expect to catch up with them.

So he waited, hoping they would soon return, but, before long he was very glad that Loris was away

The wicked Laub, who, in some manner, had found out that he had been made to work in the dwarfs' mine instead of Jorn, who had been considered too good for such disagreeable labor, had become so enraged, that he broke his contract with the dwarfs, and, instead of continuing his work in the mine, had collected a few of his depraved companions, and had made an attack upon Jorn's house.

The doors had been forced, poor Jorn had been dragged forth, beaten, and forced to fly, while Laub and his companions took possession of the house, and everything in it.

"But how could you wander so far, dear father?" asked Loris.

"It is not far," said Jorn, "our home is not many miles away."

"Then you have been going in a circle," said the citizen to the Ninkum, "and you are now very near the point you started from."

"That seems to be the case," said the Ninkum, smiling.

"But we won't talk about it now," said the citizen. "We must see what we can do for this poor man. He must have his house again."

"I would have asked the dwarfs to help me," said Jorn, "but I believe they would have killed Laub and the others if they had resisted, and I didn't want any blood shed."

"No," said the citizen. "I think we can manage it better than that. Our large friend here, will be able to get these people out of your house without killing them."

"Oh, yes," said the giant, "I'll attend to that."

Jorn being now quite ready to travel, the party proceeded, and soon reached his house.

When Laub perceived the approach of Jorn and his friends, he barricaded all the doors and windows, and, with his companions prepared to resist all attempts to enter.

But his efforts were useless. The giant knelt down before the house, and having easily removed the door, he thrust in his arm, and sweeping it around the room, easily caught three of the invaders.

He then put his other arm through the window of the Ninkum's room, and soon pulled out Laub, taking no notice of his kicks and blows.

The giant then tied the four rascals in a bunch by the feet, and laid them on the grass.

"Now," said the citizen to the Ninkum, "as there seems to be nothing more to be done for this good man and his daughter, suppose you tell me the way to the Castle of Bim. I think I can find it, if I have good directions, and I do not wish to waste any more time."

"I do not know the exact way," answered the Ninkum.

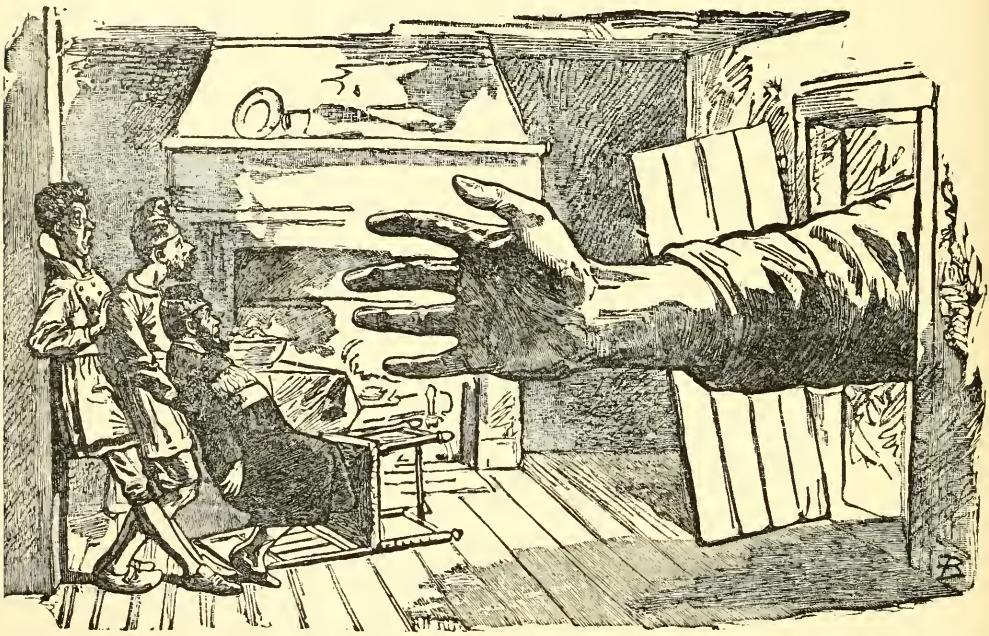
"What!" cried the other, "have you never been there?"

"No," said the Ninkum.

"Well, then, did not the person who told you about it, tell you the way?"

"No one ever told me about it," replied the Ninkum. "I have thought a great deal on the subject, and I feel sure that there must be such a place, and the way to find it is to go and look for it."

"Well," said the citizen, smiling, "you are a true Ninkum. I suppose we have all thought of some place where everything shall be just as we want it to be, but I don't believe any of us will find that place. I am going home."



THE GIANT PUTS HIS ARM THROUGH THE DOORWAY.

"And I too," said the giant, "and on my way I will stop at the Ragged Mine, and leave these fellows to the care of the dwarfs. They will see that they molest honest men no more."

"And I think I will go too," said the Ninkum, "I liked this place very much, but I am getting tired of it now."

"That will be a good thing for you to do," said the citizen, who had heard the story of how the Ninkum had been sent to

Jorn and Loris, as a reward. "You have lived for a time with these good people, and have been of some service to them, but I am quite sure they now feel that partnership with a Ninkum is a very dangerous thing, and should not be kept up too long."

"No doubt that's true," said the Ninkum. "Good-bye, my friends. I will give you my room and everything that is in it."

"You have been very kind to us," said Loris.

"Yes," said Jorn, "and you got me work that will last a long time."

"I did what I could," cried the Ninkum, mounting his horse, and gaily waving his hat around his head, "and, reversibly speaking, I took you to the Castle of Bim."